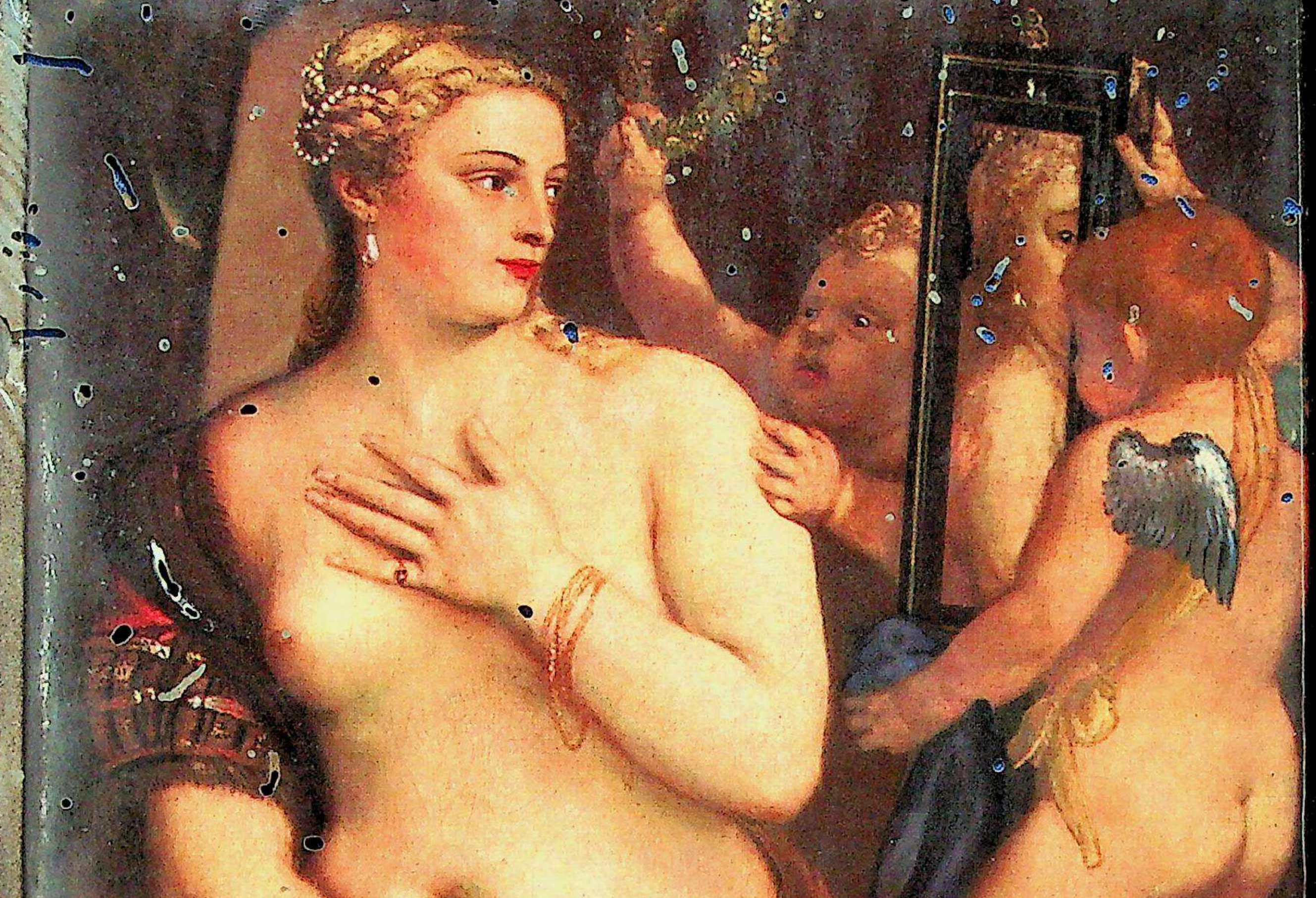

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PRINTED IN GERMANY BY CARL SCHÜNEMANN BREMEN
THIS BOOK IS PUBLISHED IN FRANCE BY
EDITIONS AIMERY SOMOGY PARIS

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THE BEGINNINGS

THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURIES

The Venetians loved gold before they loved art. It was their first love that led, by slow degrees, to their second. Daring and successful merchant seamen, whose cupidity was never satisfied, brought gold back to their island, from conquest after conquest, aboard galleys designed as much for fighting as for trade. Venice used this gold for the lavish adornment of the church of her patron saint. It was a building which, like the galleys, served a dual purpose, in this case that of both sanctuary and warehouse. The presiding saint was the apostle and evangelist Mark, whose emblem is the lion. The Venetians, by a touch of genius, gave the creature wings, to bear it overseas and bring them victory in the East, whither their adventurous voyages were directed.

It was imported wealth only which rendered Venice beautiful during the first centuries of the city's achievement of power. In the heart of that extraordinary fortress, surrounded and defended by the rampart of a broad expanse of water, the proud basilica of San Marco stands like a vast trophy erected from the spoils of the Byzantine Empire. Originally constructed after the pattern of the Greek churches, the walls of the building gradually assumed, both within and without, a sumptuous dress of rare marbles, which had been found both in the neighbouring cities of the ancient Byzantine exarchate and in those of the more distant Levant. By the end of the twelfth century skilled craftsmen were being imported by Venice from Constantinople 'not as prisoners of war,' according to Diego Valeri, 'but as courted and honoured guests.' They arranged rich mosaics of many-coloured stones on the outer walls of the building and inlaid the vaults and domes within in similar style to enchanting effect, so as to resemble a night sky thickly sown with stars.

Venetian apprentices accompanied the Greek craftsmen on the scaffolding and were taught the art of mosaic-work by them, so that eventually native schools of inlayers came into existence.

It was, no doubt, with a view to preserving valuable trade secrets that the *Maggior Consiglio* of the Most Serene Republic decreed, about 1290, that both Venetian and Byzantine workers in mosaic should reside on the island of Murano, where glass-blowing factories have been established ever since. Many of the craftsmen from the East were also icon-painters. In addition to teaching their apprentices the technique of mosaic-work they showed them how to lay solid gold grounds on wooden panels and to set hieratically stylised sacred figures against them in ritual attitudes. The transition from icon to reredos was an easy one. The

'Queen of the Adriatic', the young and potent Venice of the thirteenth century, exercised a fascination, because of its unique character, its beauty and its pomp, which is comparable to a certain extent, though for different reasons, with that which Venice still holds for us to-day. People came there—and were to come in still greater numbers during the following century—not only from continental Italy but also down through the Alps from northern Europe. Some of these visitors were painters.

The more or less conscious imitation of both the Tuscan realists active in the dawn of the Renaissance and the freely imaginative Gothic tendencies cultivated on the banks of the Rhine led to the formation of a mixed style that charmed by its very ambiguity. The Byzantine inheritance, with its love and need for gold, fine materials and glowing colours, was by no means renounced. But the new contacts tempted the Venetians to explore, not without doubts and scruples, the suggestions thus offered to them of giving some semblance of life and movement to the human figure. The Madonna, angels and sacred personages gradually began to emerge from the abstract, uniformly gilded paradise, lacking space and atmosphere, in which they had hitherto been confined.

Towards the end of the *trecento* the Virgins of Paolo Veneziano (p. 45) and of his pupil Lorenzo—the first purely Venetian painters whose names and works have come down to us—seem to be frightened by what is happening to them, to wonder whether they are really going to be allowed to live, to move their heads, to increase slightly the pressure of the arm that clasps the Child. Will their hearts really dare to beat beneath the splendid Byzantine robes, with their stiff folds, heavy with embroidery, pearls and precious stones?

But this look of absent-mindedness, of indifference, of insensibility, of non-participation, was not to last. Some vague resemblance to a feeling or perhaps to a thought is about to percolate between those half-closed eyelids, hitherto only permitting a glimpse of expressionless pupils. Yet these new-born Virgins still seem awkard and ill at ease as they perch on the strangely notched and indented Gothic thrones henceforth assigned to them. Their stony, archaic aspect has hardly changed, as though so many centuries of immobility have left them cramped. The beginnings of their liberation, the first signs of their release, are largely guesswork. Not one of these Christian idols, so lately touched by a life-giving wand, ventures upon the faintest smile of eyes or lips. The long, fragile fingers may open like the petals of a flower about to unfold. But if so the arms, from shoulder to elbow, remain pressed to the sides. The neck may bend and the brow incline. But the movement will be timid, unconscious of its own grace.

The men who painted them, the two Veneziani whose Christian names only have come down to us, were not great artists. We can still only approximately conjecture the kind of lives they led. Their works, more aspiring than inspired, and of more documentary than aesthetic value, should be regarded as mere promises, foreshadowing the future. Yet their achievement had important consequences. They set ajar the gates of a prison. During the next century those gates were to stand wide open to the emergence and the gradual diffusion of air, space and light, in a word, all the beauties and the fascination of creation.

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MATURITY: THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

In the same way as Venice had formerly imported workers in mosaic from the East to decorate the Venetian basilica, artists from the peninsula were imported during the fifteenth century to decorate the palace. Both measures had equally fruitful results in the formation of a school of native painters inspired by a collective ideal.

The first known to us of these *forestieri* did not come from very far away. He was the Paduan Guariento (p. 46), who painted an immense fresco in the Grand Council Chamber of the Doges' Palace. Most of this work, entitled 'Paradise', was destroyed by the fire of 1577. It had been carried out in the style of Giotto and therefore made little appeal to Venetian taste, which was repelled by its austerity and solemnity. The Venetians preferred to be addressed in sensuous rather than spiritual terms.

By way of compensation, they were wholly and instantly captivated by an art they well understood, the thoroughly and unaffectedly picturesque manner of their second 'guest', the Umbrian Gentile da Fabriano. He had been a great traveller in Italy, going from town to town as if on a perpetual holiday and always ready to delineate on any wall assigned to him, ceremonial processions of a semi-fictitious character, against a background of pleasing landscape or architecture. These scenes were filled with graceful figures, childishly proud of their fine, fashionable costumes. Good-natured and gay, a poet devoted to outward appearances, Gentile stayed in Venice, probably with few absences, for ten years. During this time he decorated the Grand Council Chamber with compositions narrating the city's history in flattering terms. But these paintings, too, were destroyed by fire. Nevertheless, an idea of them can be obtained from the works of Gentile da Fabriano which have come down to us, especially from the exuberant 'Adoration of the Magi' in the Uffizi Gallery at Florence. Here the sacred subject is a mere pretext for the spectacle, one in which the action is not disfigured, but transfigured, giving an irresistible impression of the happiness, health and beauty of the life portrayed. After making all due allowances for the differences in date, style and technique, we shall find the art of Gentile da Fabriano to be already, in embryo, the impulsively optimistic art of a Carpaccio, a Veronese or a Tiepolo, an art of frank enjoyment, of sensual delight.

It was from this smiling story-teller, whose Christian name suited him so well, that the Venetian painters learned to know themselves. Gentile presented them, just when it was needed, with what they had more or less vaguely been waiting for. It is pleasant to think that a group of enlightened young people may have surrounded the fifty year old master who was revealing such attractive possibilities. The group would have come not only from Venice itself but also from Veneto, the adjoining inland region. For Venice was now a continental power, controlling the cities of Padua, Vicenza and Verona to the west and the whole of Friuli-Venezia Giulia to the north.

This vanguard of enthusiasts included, as well as islanders like Jacobello del Fiore (p. 47), Michele Giambono, Jacopo Bellini and Domenico Veneziano, men from Verona like Stefano da Zevio and Pisanello. Almost all in the prime of life, they vigorously opposed the 'conservatives', the 'reactionaries', those who cultivated the Gothico-Byzantine style of the school of Murano, including the brothers Vivarini (p. 48) and the latters' adherents. Of these a few, such as Alvise Vivarini (p. 53), eventually joined the 'innovators'. Others, like the irreconcilable Carlo Crivelli (p. 49), ended by leaving Venice for ever. Crivelli remained for the rest of his life in various obscure frontier towns, where he painted in an archaic style, against gold backgrounds either goffered or inlaid with black enamel and crowded with architectural features that were covered with all kinds of fruits and vegetables, pallid and under-developed figures representing the Virgin. Their meagre charms, their attitudes distorted sometimes to the point of caricature, had a mysterious fascination which might have been that of Chinese princesses.

When Gentile da Fabriano decided to leave Venice, some of his pupils, for instance the young Pisanello, continued to decorate the Palace. But others, like Domenico Veneziano and Jacopo Bellini, followed their master. Domenico settled in Florence. He assimilated the Tuscan style to such an extent that he can no longer be regarded by the art historian as belonging to the Venetian school. Jacopo Bellini (p. 50), on the other hand, stayed with his master and in all probability went as far as Rome with him.

After an industrious and profitable absence of two years he returned to his native city and there initiated his two sons, Giovanni and Gentile, into the beauties of the *stil nuovo*. He then sent them to continue their studies in that city of learned humanists, Padua, which was at the time the cultural centre of North Italy. Here they attended the extremely popular studio of Squarcione. The latter, a mediocre painter, but an archaeologist obsessed by Greek and Roman antiquity, had brought back from Greece and Rome a large collection of medals and intaglios which particularly obsessed, in his turn, Andrea Mantegna, then quite young and 'the most Roman of Italian painters'. Mantegna and the Bellinis became close friends in Squarcione's studio. Mantegna eventually married Nicolosia, his friends' sister, and for a long time exercised a powerful influence upon Giovanni Bellini.

But the two brothers, when they returned to Venice, had by no means lost, despite the teachings of Squarcione and Mantegna, their Venetian characteristics. They showed themselves perfectly ready to surrender to colour and light, the two 'mistresses' to whom the painters of the Lagoon were destined to remain incorrigibly faithful until the still distant day when both combined in their flight to the empyrean of Tiepolo.

The two Bellini brothers devoted their first works to representations of the life of Venice. In their turn, together with their contemporaries and younger men, such as Lazzaro Bastiani, Giovanni Mansueti, Benedetto Diana and Vittore Carpaccio, they continued the decoration of the Palace of the Doges, where their father, when he was their age, had begun his career. But these works, too, perished in the regrettable fire already mentioned. Some notion, however, of what they must have been like can be derived from the works ordered from the same painters, about the same time, by the Charity Brotherhoods for the decoration of the parlours or the chapels of their *scuole*. One of these 'series' still adorns the Scuola di San Giorgio dei Schiavoni, for which it was painted. This work is by Carpaccio, as is also the 'series' of the Scuola di Santa Orsola (p. 51), at the present time on exhibition, complete, at the Venetian Academy, where what remains of the 'series' of the Scuola di San Giovanni Evangelista is also preserved. The four pictures still extant which belonged to the Scuola di San Stefani have however been distributed between Milan, Paris (p. 52), Stuttgart and Berlin.

These 'series' are all very beautiful, very elaborate and very animated. The great majority have as their setting the monuments, squares and canals of Venice. They are bathed in the characteristic light, at once hazy and transparent, of the Lagoon, just as it can be seen in the extremely lifelike *vedute* of Canaletto and Guardi four centuries later.

Gentile Bellini and Vittore Carpaccio specialise, from one point of view, in these 'visual narratives', the modern observer of which finds himself invited to become in imagination the contemporary of the Venetians of those days, even if the scene takes place far from Venice, in Rome, in Cologne, in Bethlehem or in some Levantine country which Gentile had visited. Probably he did not feel very much out of place there, for in his time Venice itself swarmed with Turks and Slavs.

Carpaccio, both as painter and as poet, surpasses Gentile, who was more submissively prosaic. The former had the magical gift of transforming a familiar reality into a delicate and refined spectacle from fairyland. Few artists, with the possible exception of Watteau, have succeeded so well, by such simple and direct means, and without ever deviating from the truth, in turning the actual into the dreamlike.

Yet Carpaccio, compared with Giovanni Bellini, is but a minor master of the exquisite, a '*genre*' painter. One might almost go so far as to call him a 'teller of anecdotes.'

Giovanni Bellini is chronologically the first of the great Venetians. He was the father of both the body and the soul of Venetian painting. He stands at the head of that school. Without him, neither Giorgione, nor Titian, nor any of the painters of the *seicento* would have achieved quite what they did.

His personality is slow to emerge. Until he was close on forty his works (p. 55) resemble, sometimes to the point of being easily mistaken for them, those of his virile and uncompromising brother-in-law. They are similar in the severity and firmness of the drawing, the relatively unsubtle technique and the passionate expression of emotion in the subjects treated. Yet already his 'Virgins with Child' (p. 54) hint at the imminent development of a pacific temperament, given to sentimental feelings of a somewhat melancholy cast. The poet and the devotee in him seem to be awaiting, before expressing themselves to the full, the painter's complete mastery of his own means of expression. It was at that very moment, in fact, that the last of the messengers of fate arrived in Venice. Like Gentile da Fabriano, Antonello da Messina (p. 57) was a travelling artist. And just as the former had initiated the father, so the latter now initiated the son.

At Naples Antonello had lived with the northern artists summoned to the Court by King René. According to Vasari he had been to the Netherlands and returned with a priceless gift, the secret of employing oil colours as they had been used ever since the time of Van Eyck in another country of canals and maritime skies.

Thereafter the conquest of the third dimension, in other words the ability to give the illusion of space and its depth on a flat surface, became an accomplished fact at Venice. Giambellino was painting his first portraits before the departure of Antonello, who paid two visits to Venice but hardly stayed more than two years there in all. The portraits were followed at a later date by those masterly religious compositions in which the Virgin-Mother, endowed with a serenity beyond words, is enthroned in the company of saints deep in contemplation while angels at their feet play musical instruments, within a stately architectural setting or against some landscape of Paradise. But it is a Paradise benevolent to man, more evocative and prophetic of heavenly peace than were the eternal gold backgrounds of the icon-screens. The pictures make a direct appeal through the eyes to the heart. They recall the words sung at first communions: 'Heaven has come to earth'. For here heaven and earth have become one.

These are key-works. With a superlative modesty, as though involuntarily and unknowingly, gently and in silence, Bellini gives us the first glimpse of the High Renaissance. He lived long enough to work closely with the two pupils, Giorgione and Titian, whose genius he had to some extent brought to birth. He eventually recognised them as his masters. With them, and, so to speak, invited by them, he entered a new world, that of the Fable. His first steps in it were also his last. With only two years more to live and without abandoning the pious Madonna with Child to which he had originally devoted his art, he undertook a mythological composition for Alphonso, Duke of Ferrara. The picture seems to have been inspired by memories of Giorgione, who by that time—in 1515—had been dead for three years. The work is most touching in its simple fervour. But the old man left it unfinished. Titian, his second spiritual son, completed it. Today named the 'Feast of the Gods' (p. 56), its former title, 'The Gods on Earth', suited it much better. For did it not illustrate that all-important moment at which the Gods abandoned their ancient dwelling on Olympus to come and live, at Venice, among mankind?

Before turning to consider Bellini's two major disciples, Giorgione and Titian, we may associate with him and his followers some of his pupils of less imposing calibre. These first offspring of the same father are hardly distinct from one another. The result is that the appearance of relationship between them leaves them no defence against the 'recognised authorities' on the history of art, whose favourite sport consists, as is well known, in attributing the same work by turns to one different painter after another. It is a practice which leads to impassioned encounters and to shifts of ground which, to be frank, involve a certain degree of pedantry.

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The first followers of Bellini, who flourished during the second half of the fifteenth and the first third of the sixteenth centuries, still belong to the past by reason of the purity, sincerity and fervour of their religious faith. Yet they also belong to the future through the ability they had quite recently acquired to substitute aerial for linear perspective. They might be compared with birds lately released from captivity which fly boldly out into the world, confident of their wings and voices, to test them for the first time in complete freedom. They experienced a kind of physical intoxication in the enjoyment of painting what they saw and more particularly the landscapes, as they really were, of their own countries. This meant those of the mainland. For, with the exception, of Alvise Vivarini, there was not at this time a single native-born citizen of Venice in the school which was called Venetian. There will be hardly more, as we shall see, in the following century.

Behind the handsome Madonnas of peasant type, which sometimes remind one of calm and noble pagan divinities, not a single *seascape* is to be seen. The backgrounds consist of quiet and fertile meadows, interspersed with woodland or shaded at intervals by some stately, isolated tree. The rhythmic contours of the fields lead the eye to the horizon, towards mountains in orderly and well proportioned groups, with gentle slopes that are the friends of man and bluish or gilded summits that are the friends of heaven.

This assembly of artists of a like nature included citizens of Vicenza such as Giovanni Buonsignori and Bartolommeo Montagna, men from Verona like Domenico and Francesco Morone, Liberale da Verona and Boccaccio Boccacini, and Friulani (Furlaniens) like Gerolamo da Treviso, Vincenzo Catena, Cima da Conegliano, Martino di Udine and others. They were all excellent colourists, all quite capable of combining solids with space by modelling their shapes in light and all unconditionally committed to the observation of nature and the most faithful possible rendering of it.

In this group of Bellini's first pupils two stand out as of more marked personality than the rest, Cima da Conegliano and Bartolommeo Montagna.

Cima da Conegliano (p. 59) is an exquisite master. He seems never to have painted except in the spring and at the earliest hours of the day, when the sun has scarcely begun to rise, in a sky gleaming with the soft and delicate light of a pearl, and has not yet despoiled the earth of her robe of dew. I believe it was Corot who called such times 'the hours of the lark'. Similarities that can hardly be expressed in words are evident between the styles of Cima and Corot. In each there is the same purity and diaphanous quality of the atmosphere, the same discretion and the same diffidence in the depiction of sensation.

The virile art of Bartolommeo Montagna (p. 58) contradicts that of Cima. He is the painter of those summer hours in which light reigns at the height of its power and with all its resources, when the sun clothes in golden armour everything it strikes. It is in landscapes that seem to have been rendered mineral that Montagna seats his proud Virgins, resembling Pallas Athene, with their clearly outlined features. Under the haughtily arched eyebrows the wide, direct and steady gaze recalls that of an antique statue. The Child is seldom shown recumbent and lulled asleep on the figure's knees, but standing upright, wide awake, robust and solid as a miniature athlete. Montagna would be a famous man if the letters of his name, with one exception, did not correspond with those of the name of a painter whose ambitious genius surpassed his own.

Giorgione's dates, 1478—1511, place him in this generation. He died on the threshold of the High Renaissance, to which he belongs if not by his actual works, by reason of the posterity he fathered. He has his place at the end of the present chapter. But he will also, inevitably, be discussed in that which follows. Vasari tells us something, though very little, of the life and work of Giorgio Barbarelli, nicknamed *Il Giorgione*—the 'Great George'. His life is such a mystery and his work so enigmatic that they have made a legendary character of this young man who died at the age of thirty-three. The legend is both double, and self-contradictory. For there is no single element in common between the magnificent and magnified Giorgione who was implicitly believed in at one time and the somewhat 'minimised' Giorgione in whom it is suggested that we should now believe. Neither of these is the 'true' Giorgione.

The first was 'endowed with a feverish and passionate nature.' He was addicted, if we are to credit an old writer, to 'wild nocturnal adventures, romantic behaviour under the balcony of some fair unknown, sword-thrusts by moonlight and in general a life of emotion and disorder. . . he had all the qualities calculated to please a woman. . . yet the seducer in him did no harm to the artist: after nights passed in the intoxication of orgy he was found hard at work and full of ardour. He was about to attain the climax of his glory when sudden death carried him off. His passionately adored mistress having been stricken with the plague while in his arms, the great artist desired once more to kiss the lips of the dead woman and was himself infected by the dread disease. . .' According to another version of his death an intimate friend deprived him of the same beloved mistress and this betrayal caused the painter such terrible grief that he died of it. 'It goes without saying that Giorgione, during his brief and stormy passage through life, produced, by way of relaxation, hundreds of portraits and profane or sacred compositions. There are few galleries in Europe which do not claim to possess some example, authentic or presumed, of his prolific genius.'

These claims, if we are to believe modern experts, are wholly unjustified. Using scientific methods and spurred on by mutual rivalry, these authorities have succeeded in robbing a Giorgione stripped of romance not only of his gratifying feminine conquests but also and above all of many pictures he was supposed to have painted. These critics have gone so far that if we accept their conclusions as valid we shall be obliged to admit that only one single work unquestionably attributable to Giorgione has come down to us, the 'Virgin Enthroned Between St. Liberale and St. Francis'. This is a retable painted, as is known from a reliable source, in 1504, and since then part of the adornment of the main altar of the cathedral at Castelfranco, the town in which the painter was born.

There can be no question here of expounding or commenting upon the views of this 'jury of professors', especially as many of their attributions—more ingenious than disturbing—have been abandoned for others which may well meet a similar fate in the future. It will be sufficient to note that none of the works thus subtracted from the list would be what it is if Giorgione had never existed. It is true that his very existence has been disputed by the most intrepid of his 'despoilers'. According to Louis Hourticq, Giorgione is 'a mythical personage, entirely the invention of Vasari.'

It is highly probable that some works by Giorgione have not come down to us, that others are only known to us through copies or imitations and that still others, which he did not himself finish, were completed by one or other of his rivals or pupils. It is also highly probable that there were good grounds for certain changes of attribution, though scholars hardly ever agree on the names of the painters to whom they assign the works they deny to Giorgione. (At the present moment four painters are being cited as potentially responsible for the *Concert Champêtre).* It is none the less true that in such works the plastic world created and animated by the genius of Giorgione is at once evident to the eye and the feelings of the spectator.

Few masters, in the long history of art, have possessed to the same degree as Giorgione the power to transpose sensual emotions into spiritual meditations and to entrust the expression of them, without any depreciation or loss of their poetic element, to pure painting. Fewer still have exercised this power with Giorgione's superlative and incorruptible innocence. Nevertheless, Giorgione is no meteorite fallen from the sky. His first works were not welcomed by the painters of his time as revelations but as confirmations. *The Sleeping Venus* (p. 60), *The Three Philosophers, The Concert Champêtre* (p. 62), the *Concert* at the Pitti Gallery, *La Tempesta* (p. 61) and the portrait of *Antonio Boccardi* were the kind of pictures that everyone in the studios of Venice at that period vaguely dreamed of executing. They incarnated a collective ideal impatiently awaiting the moment to burst upon the world. Of this ideal Giorgione was to some extent the liberator or, as we say nowadays, the catalyst. 'The works of Giorgione,' writes Bernard Berenson, 'were in harmony with the spirit of the Renaissance at its fullest development. They met with the success reserved for works that awaken the consciousness of a need and are fine enough to satisfy it.' For this reason the painters lucky enough to be present at the first appearance of these 'hallucinated' pictures—if the adjective is permissible—did not so much discover as recognise themselves in the new style. They adopted it instantly and unanimously, not in the sense of copying the paintings, but to draw inspiration from them.

THE ZENITH

THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

TITIAN, like Giorgione, came originally from the mainland. And it was the mountainous and wooded landscape in which he had been brought up that he painted, as the short-lived Giorgione, too, had painted it, with a fidelity that never varied. Venice and the Lagoon do not appear in more than two works by Titian, *The Pope Before St. Peter,* which dates from his first youth and owes more to Bellini than to Giorgione, and the dashing Ancona altarpiece, which is the first picture dated in Titian's own hand (1520).

Titian was born at Pieve di Cadore, a stronghold buried among the forest-clad ranges of the Julian Alps. As to the year of his birth, it was unanimously believed until lately, on the evidence of one of his own letters, that he had was born some time between 1477 and 1480. And since the date of his death (1576) was certain one was bound to conclude that he had lived for almost a whole century. But to-day a certain number of art historians deny the possibility of such exceptional longevity. They indicate—or would prefer—1488, if not 1496, as the date of his birth. If the latter of these dates, both entirely hypothetical, were to be accepted, Titian would no longer be almost exactly—within nearly two years—the same age as Giorgione. He would be his junior by two decades. In that case, since Giorgione died at thirty-three, the first works of Titian would be those of an adolescent student. It is more sensible to credit Titian's own statement, in a letter written four years before his death to Philip II, to the effect that he was then aged ninety-five.

We ought not, then, to regard him as the young pupil, the *garzone* of Giorgione, but as a fellow-student with the latter in Bellini's studio, no doubt, like all the rest, completely under the 'spell', in the magical sense of that word, of that young man of genius, who exercised his fascination even upon the aged Giambellino himself.

An exhibition devoted to Giorgione, which took place at the Doges' Palace in 1955, assembled nearly a hundred and fifty pictures. Yet these were only a minority of the works preserved in the galleries of both hemispheres. Very few of them were unquestionably by Giorgione's own hand. Nevertheless all, no less unquestionably, were 'Giorgionesque' to such an extent that one may consider him to have remained, after his death, a living influence until the middle of the sixteenth century. The consensus of opinion of the learned editors of the 1955 catalogue declares that a good two dozen of the paintings listed might be by either Giorgione or Titian. The survival of Giorgione's influence leaps to the eye in such works as the *Holy Family with Shepherd,* the *Noli Me Tangere, Sacred* *and Profane Love*, the *Virgin of the Cherries*, the *Herodiade*, the *Three Ages of Man*, the *Laura Dianti*, the *Flora* and the *Man with the Gloves* (p. 63). All these works were painted by Titian between 1511 and 1518. It was in the latter year that, like a sudden storm from an unclouded sky, there burst the dramatic, heroic and gigantic *Assumption* of the Frari. Titian, then just thirty, had now become conscious of the range of his powers and the heights to which they might lead him. He ceases to pay tribute to Giorgione and proceeds, without disowning or forgetting him, to transcend him by sheer genius.

Thenceforward, until the very end, Titian relied, with perfect equanimity, upon his gifts, confident of his great destiny. 'Master of himself as of the universe', he seems never to have had any doubt of his mission to provide mankind with an image born of reality but surpassing it in beauty. The earth is full of sorrow and of wounds; the perishable body of man is abused by age and sickness; passions stamp their scars upon the human face; the hills and the meadows, the rivers and the forests, almost always bear some sign of decay imposed by man. But Titian the redeemer comes to dress the sores, reform what is deformed and efface the tokens of depravity and servitude. For him a woman is alwas beautiful, a man always vigorous, as in the days of their sovereignty in Eden, before the Fall. Titian dedicated his beneficent and magnanimous genius to the regeneration, the rehabilitation and the justifying of all created things. His whole production is an act of faith.

There is no break in the continuity of his profoundly optimistic work. It lasted, growing and renewing itself incessantly, for sixty years. Whether his subjects are sacred or profane, whether he works on huge decorative canvases or on easel pictures, his paintings have as close a mutual connection as the pearls of a necklace. He may take his themes from the Bible and the Evangelists or from fable and history, compose feminine (p. 64) or masculine (p. 63) portraits or have no definite theme at all, in the works he called his 'poems', ingrained memories of Giorgione's 'poetry', where noble figures assemble in noble landscapes at the gilded hour of sunset. Or he may paint a voluptuously stirring *nude*, presenting Venus and Danäe with the features of some prince's mistress, the prince himself beside them in wondering contemplation. Titian is always happy to paint, going always to the same fountain-head of beauty and of life.

The fact is proved by Vasari, who writes: 'He sketched rapidly, in bold touches and thick layers. Then he would leave the sketch in order to take it up later and bring it to the point of harmonious perfection. . . whatever the subject chosen, he rested from one task by turning to another. . .' Accordingly, the year of the *Assumption* is also that of the *Bacchanal* (p. 65), the year of *Charles V on Horseback* that of the *Toilet of Venus* and the year of *Jupiter and Antiope* that of the *Cornaro Family*. Nevertheless, during the years immediately before his death he painted only religious pictures, his supreme work being the sublime and deeply moving *Pieta* (p. 66), intended for his tomb and left unfinished. 'His last works', writes Vasari, 'are carried out in great brush-strokes, in such a way that one sees nothing on a close view, though at a distance they appear perfect. . .' Goethe said of the aged Titian that he 'painted symbolically what he had formerly painted concretely, not velvet but the idea of velvet. . .'

Handsome in both face and figure and loving life as much as it loved him, Titian did not disdain either distinctions or honours. He hardly ever left Venice except in great state, as the welcome guest of the Este family at Ferrara, of the Gonzaga at Mantua and of the Farnese in many different places. Charles V and after him Philip II treated him as a favourite. In his youth he had declined to visit Rome when invited by Leo X. But at the age of sixty-eight he accepted the invitation of Paul III, who received him hospitably and allotted him splendid accommodation in the Vatican. It was there that he painted a 'family portrait' of the old Pope conferring with his two nephews. This composition is a forerunner, in its unsparing clarity, of those delineated two centuries later by Goya.

Titian's extreme old age was free from infirmities. He had always loved money and he had become 'rather grasping'. While closely supervising the management of the property he owned on the mainland and engaged, in company with his friend the antiquary Strada, in the marketing of works of art, he still continued to paint—with the assistance, however, of his son Orazio. His vitality seemed invincible. It only yielded, at last, to an epidemic of the plague at Venice. This scourge carried Titian off on the 25th August 1576. He lies buried in the church of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari. Two of his most beautiful works, the *Assumption* and the *Pesaro Madonna*, keep watch there over his immortality.

After the Portuguese who sailed round Africa had discovered the sea-route to India the temporal supremacy of Venice began to be threatened. The Winged Lion's naval dominion came to an end. And soon Charles V, master of half the world, took over the peninsula. Yet the Serene Republic was enabled to mask its decline, to some extent, through its painters.

A second generation of the pupils of Giovanni Bellini ensured the artistic pre-eminence of Venice in the first half of the sixteenth century. In the second half it was maintained by Tintoretto and Veronese.

All these painters were contemporaries, within a few years, of Titian. It also happened that nearly all of them were born in the same year. For there are good years for painting, just as there are for wine and crops. 1480 was the rich year in question. It was the birth-date of Palma Vecchio (1480—1528), Bartolommeo Veneto (1480—1540) (p. 77), Dosso Dossi (1480—1542), Giovanni Cariani (1480—1547), Gian Girolamo Savoldo (1480—1548), Lorenzo Lotto (1480—1556), and Francesco Torbido (1480—1562) (p. 74). They all died before Titian, who also survived, like the patriarch he was, the younger representatives of Bellini's following, such as Sebastiano del Piombo (1485—1547), Bonifazio di Pitati (1487—1553), Bernardino Licinio (1489—1549), Domenico Brusasorci (1493—1567) and Paris Bordone (1500—1570).

As 'chorus-master', Titian presides on high in this period. But he neither obscures nor overpowers the artists mentioned above. They were not concerned to equal his achievement or to ape it. Only one of them, the Furlanian, Pordenone, dared to compete with him openly. The trial took place at Venice itself and Pordenone's defeat was crushing. Almost all the rest, being fervent disciples of Giorgione, remained filially loyal to Titian. Their characteristic feeling and technique are so close to his that sometimes their works, even to-day, are attributed to him. But it would be difficult to find, in the remarkably uniform productions of these excellent and often great artists, the equivalent of those vast compositions in which the mature Titian drew his inspiration from famous episodes of fable, of the Old and New Testaments and of history. The dynamic quality—owing something to the example of Michelangelo—in the *Assumption*, the great *Ecce Homo* and the *Battle of Cadore* exceeds the range of Titian's contemporaries. In the latters' works Cain does not kill Abel, Abraham does not sacrifice Isaac, blood does not flow from under the Crown of Thorns or gush from the side of Prometheus. There are no martyrs, tortures or battles. The depiction of old age, disease and death is avoided. The 'Giorgionesque' artists held aloof from the great adventures and ordeals of humanity. They never attempted, in their imperturbable serenity, to cross the frontiers of a world of harmony, happiness and beauty where 'action is not the sister of dream'. They were 'waking dreamers'. They kept their eyes wide open and only painted what they saw. But they painted it with a fervent, passionate and exclusive devotion. Since they now held brushes loaded with a coloured paste, endowed by oil with fluidity and the semblance of life, they found sensual satisfaction in the intoxicating power they thus acquired to surprise climates, seasons, days and hours, to arrest the flight of time. Like Goethe's Faust, they cried to the passing moment, 'Wait, thou art so beautiful!' And the moment waited. It was seized upon the canvas and remains to-day for us to contemplate.

Why should they resort to fiction? For those contemplative spirits art, in the words of Alfred de Vigny, 'is selected truth'. They selected a whole series of allied phenomena. Their landscapes were not far to seek in the prosperous districts of the mainland where, for the most part, they had been born. Their personages were contemporary men and women, girls resembling Venus, and handsome youths, well set up and healthy, wearing rich and brilliant clothing which looks to us to-day like a disguise but which was as strictly in the fashion of the time as were the garments of the models of Watteau or Manet. Their hours were those which inspire poetry, that hour, preferably, which induces meditation, when the day is about to end and the light is growing rosy, bathing objects and living beings in its mysterious magic. The occupations, too, which they chose to paint, were pacific, as befitted the persons, the landscape and the hour selected. While at Florence painters were often also goldsmiths or silversmiths, sculptors or architects, at Venice they were often also musicians. The musical element in sixteenth-century Venetian painting is already perceptible in the last works of Giovanni Bellini. And it may well have been the master of this host of artists who set its pitch. 'Giorgione sang and played the lute so divinely that he was often engaged to do so at the concerts and other gatherings of the Venetian nobility.' Two of his finest pictures, the *Concert Champêtre* in the Louvre (p. 62) and the *Concert* in the Pitti Palace gallery, have music as their subject. And the 'Giorgionesque' artists in their turn, like their master, introduced this subject into their paintings, not in a spirit of imitation, but in one of communion. Titian himself did so in his *Venus with the Organist* in the Prado. The substantial language of colour positively lends to these works the illusion of sensations and impressions as fugitive and imponderable as those of the insubstantial language of sound, whether blown by the flute at the lips of some instrumentalist in the picture or emanating from the viol of another musician when he touches the strings and moves the bow. Joubert has written that 'there are certain emotions so delicate that it would be impossible to express them save in colour or sound.' Colours and sounds become indistinguishable from each other in these enchanted paintings.

Such 'painted poems' are typically Venetian. There are so many of them that it would be possible—and tempting—to compile an album of these works alone, analogous to one of those collections in which, as a matter of fact, 'pictures of music' in colour have now for the first time been reproduced. The refined and subtle *Before the Concert* (p. 73), Giovanni Cariani's masterpiece, for instance, shows a pensive luteplayer tuning his instrument, with deep attention, on the bank of some tributary of the Brenta. Two graceful young women are seated beside him, their foreheads gently touching as they study the music they are about to sing. Another example would be a second masterpiece, entitled *The Rich Man's Feast*, by Bonifazio di Pitati (p. 72). Here the music is depicted at the full strength of its flow, spreading its princely sway far into the golden evening, while an utterly absorbed and motionless feminine listener wills the melody to reveal the secrets of her heart.

Two painters in the group formed by Giovanni Bellini and Giorgione stand out clearly from the rest. These are Sebastiano del Piombo and Lorenzo Lotto. The former lived for thirty years in Rome. There he underwent successively, without losing his innate gifts as a colourist, the influences of the artist of the *Stanze* and of the painter of the Sistine Chapel. The fine *Violinist*, where the bow of the player is garlanded with laurel, was for a long time accepted as being by Raphael. But to-day it is unanimously attributed to Sebastiano del Piombo. At a later date the latter became so steeped in the style of Michelangelo that some of his last works are believed, rightly or wrongly, to be in part by the hand of Michelangelo. Sebastiano, apart from his eclecticism, is a powerful artist, in love with *grandezza*. Portraits like that of *Andrea Doria* and compositions such as the *Visitation* (p. 67) and the moving *Pieta* of Viterbo prove him to have been on occasion a master of the first rank.

Although the merits of the work of Lorenzo Lotto, in which there is a certain feminine sensibility, are quite different from those of the robust achievements of the thoroughly masculine Piombo, Lotto's painting, too, is built up from contrasting elements and intrusions. The influences brought to bear upon him are almost always the result of the frequent changes of residence to which he was impelled by a morbid restlessness. He met Raphael in Rome, Leonardo in Milan, Correggio and Parmigiano at Parma and, at Bergamo, certain shadowy reflections of northern painters like Altdorfer and Grünewald. Such influences, being so various and so transitory, never endangered for long or to any serious extent the originality of Lotto's endearing genius, which was thoroughly independent. He could never stay anywhere for any length of time, least of all at Venice, where he had been born of parents from Bergamo. He left Venice at fifteen and only returned to it occasionally, each time in the hope, invariably disappointed, of being recognised and appreciated by the fashionable painters of the day. Their aesthetic ideal differed from his. They were bound to misunderstand and disdain him.

State Museum,
LUCKNOW.

He had to be content with working in the provinces, where he kept mostly to the small frontier towns. Gradually becoming less of a Venetian, he lived in poverty, decorating insignificant churches, work congenial to him on account of his deeply religious temperament. His paintings remained there, forgotten and lost, until comparatively recent times. Some of them, such as the *Annunciation* of Recanati, the retable and predella, depicting *Santa Lucia*, at Jesi, the *Holy Rosary* at Cingoli, the *Virgin Crowned* at Ancona and the *Presentation at the Temple* of Loretto, simultaneously charm and amaze the spectator by the novelty and singularity of their composition, the delicacy and daring of their lighting, the unusual colour organisation and nervously intense sensibility. With the exception of one exquisite profane picture, showing the most chaste of nude Venuses being brutally scourged by a raging figure of Virtue, Lotto never painted anything but sacred subjects and portraits.

The religious works fail to hold one's attention at first sight. The spectator must yield slowly, allowing his emotions to get the upper hand, to the long, flexible forms of Virgins and female saints, invariably bending forward in an unsteady, inclined posture, as if in fear, which Lotto rarely abandoned.

As for his few portraits, they have long been celebrated and the pride of the museums which possess them. They are regarded as some of the most touching ever painted. Their appeal, in its general effect, is irresistible and inexhaustible. They are so steeped in a life of their own that they seem to be forever imparting confidences, telling their secrets, to the observer. Yet the impulse to do so appears involuntary and to be less, perhaps, that of the model than of the painter. Lotto is one of the great novelists of the human face and heart. Like every great novelist, he is at the same time in the presence and in the minds of his characters. Their features and expressions invite speculation, which is reinforced by some unusual detail, setting a problem all the more intriguing for being left to the imagination alone to solve. Why, we may ask, does this splendidly dressed and intently absorbed gentleman—the portrait is in the Vienna Museum—point with his right hand, laid upon his heart, to the gold claw which he grips in his left, seeming to indicate, accordingly, that the claw has ripped his heart? Why does the extremely elegant young thinker—his picture is in the Accademia at Venice—hesitate to consult the folio volume held open by his alert and finely moulded hands on a table bearing a letter, half unfolded, which he has just been reading and which had contained some pallid rose-petals, possibly a pledge of love, perhaps a farewell gift? And what is the meaning of that absurd lizard creeping into the folds of the carpet, close to the petals? Where is the black gaze directed of the unforgettable portrait of Laura da Pola (p. 76) at the Brera Gallery in Milan? And is the little closed book she shows us, with an air of assumed indifference, really a prayer-book? And lastly, shall we ever know the secret of another portrait, that of a heavily bearded man, thick-set and apparently rather thick-headed, plunged in melancholy to the very depths of his being, whose right hand is crushing—once again!—roses that half hide, in their crumpled petals, a miniature skull? It has been asserted that this is a self-portrait. One wishes the assertion could be proved true. For this fascinating figure looks very like the image we may be disposed to form of the great, enigmatic artist, who was so lonely and unlucky, throughout his life, in his time and place. He has had to wait nearly four centuries for rehabilitation and resurrection.

Lorenzo Lotto seems about to abandon Giorgione and the latter's posterity. Tintoretto makes a violent break with these predecessors. He takes us into a new world, one no longer of peace, and not easy to enter.

Though a visit to Venice is not indispensable for a study of Giorgione, Titian and Veronese, who are all very well represented elsewhere, it is only at Venice that close acquaintance can be made with Carpaccio, Tintoretto and Tiepolo. These artists are at home on the banks of the Lagoon, domiciled, we may say, in its palaces, churches and *scuole*. For those buildings are profusely adorned with their works, which have always remained there. It is a case of love at first sight with the delightful Carpaccio, the jubilant Tiepolo. There can be no question of resisting the advances they make. But Tintoretto takes no trouble to please the spectator. Quite the contrary! He disconcerts, fatigues, repels and terrifies. Can one bear to face these furious conflicts of Day and Night? Or endure the deluge of his cataclysms? Looking at his picture the observer almost grows dizzy and panic-stricken, as though caught between precipice and avalanche among Alpine peaks.

Yet at Venice there is no escape, whether one wills it or not, from Tintoretto. Scores of his works are scattered through the city. One encounters them at every turn, day after day, almost hour by hour. One cannot enter a church where he is not represented, either dominating the entire building or confined to the solitude of a dark chapel. He seems to be lying in wait to subjugate, to 'possess' the spectator. The power of his fascination is so great that one is physically compelled to yield to it, drowned in the 'torrent of his imagination and genius', as Taine has it. It almost becomes impossible to do without him, like the craving of a drug-addict.

It has been said of Tintoretto that he was 'the first of the realists'. But can his world, which surpasses Nature, be natural? Can his re-creation of Creation fit the term? Is he not rather to be counted one of the great idealists? Is he not, in the history of art, the first, with Michelangelo, of those prodigious individualists of genius whose inspired poetic fervour dominates 'laws' of art? Such men know that they can, without risk, 'work clear of leading-strings'. The most frenzied of Tintoretto's compositions is always, despite appearances, motivated, supervised and disciplined by a spiritual order. He translates reality into a vision. Yet it is to reality alone that he feels bound. Like Shakespeare, he makes of humanity observed the humanity of a dream.

Living in the extremely sociable city of Venice, Tintoretto declined to enter society. He kept to the seclusion of the studio he had made at the end of the rear courtyard of his house. The place was windowless. He worked there by the dim and shifting light of lamps. He did not use living models, but a collection of puppets made of wood and rags, and roughly jointed, which he forced into the attitudes of the human body, but only in appearances of stress, suffering or torture. Tumbled across platforms erected by means of scaffolding, their limbs spread-eagled by firmly moored ropes, the puppets posed for him. He made copies of them on coarsely woven canvases, never large enough 'for his huge appetite'. His brushes were loaded with oil that seemed to be molten, like lava and liquid lead. With these he conjured up, like a necromancer, entire nations overwhelmed by fabulous catastrophes, armies in close combat or rout, martyrs subjected to torment, corpses snatched from cemeteries, torrents of the damned, angels bursting from the sky, gatherings of prophets, and street-porters, beggars and kings. And almost always, above all, loomed a dusky sky, belching forth clouds, rent by lightning, riddled by volleys of stars, swept by hurricane and tempest, at the moment now of the Flood, now of the Day of Judgment.

When Tintoretto paints an *Annunciation*, the archangel who brings the message does not descend, he explodes, from heaven. He falls like a meteorite on the house of Mary. He enters neither by the door nor by the window. He penetrates the wall, charging through it. The Virgin cowers under the boisterous, swooping flight of the angel like a dove under the shadow of an eagle. One can hardly doubt that the messenger brings word, not of the wondrous night of the Nativity, but of the night of the Mount of Olives, the night of Golgotha.

The fifty or sixty scenes from the Old and New Testaments which completely cover the walls and ceilings of the two floors of the *Scuola di San Rocco* are all conveyed with the same frantic passion, so that they seem to quiver with life. No restful or tranquil passages relieve them. Yet beyond these crowded nightmares there are sometimes to be seen, amid the mists of the far horizon, companies of women in fairylike attire and the hues of mother-of-pearl and opal. They are spectators of the drama, in which they take no part. They are perceived by the brooding painter-poet as if they were mirages, the distant elect of a homeland not of this world, the almost immaterial forms of a dream never to be realised. As he gazed, his favourite daughter Marietta, seated beside him, would play the lute. For Tintoretto 'was a student of music. He had even improved certain instruments and invented new ones.' This information, given by Ridolfi, is confirmed by Vasari. 'There lived in the city of Venice a painter named Jacopo Tintoretto who practised all the arts, especially music.'

Tintoretto's work is like that of Giorgione and of Veronese—we shall return to him later—deeply concerned with music. But there is no resemblance, of course, between what is suggested by Tintoretto, without depicting players, and the music of the *Concert Champêtre*. In the works of Tintoretto which we have hitherto discussed music holds sway, in a manner of speaking, symphonically. It may be imagined by us to-day as uncompromisingly romantic, like that of Beethoven, Liszt or Wagner. But there are other pictures by Tintoretto in which the thunder ceases to roll and the wind to roar, in which a lull has succeeded the storm. Nearly all of them are conceived rather in the style of easel-paintings than in that of fresco. Nor do the majority of these relatively few compositions deal with affecting and grandiose historical events. They are inspired by the fables of antiquity (p. 80). There is no artist of the High Renaissance, from Raphael to Michelangelo, from Giorgione to Correggio, from Titian to Veronese, in whose works pagan deities and the Christian God do not seem to be on good terms together.

It is in Tintoretto's 'mythological works' that he is most himself. In them his temperament and its climate are most apparent. For him the antique world is one of movement. His goddesses do not slumber peacefully in luxuriant meadows or dream idly, relaxing the whole weight of their bodies upon comfortable beds, as they lie passive in the spell of voluptuous ease. Titian's are lovely, lazy creatures, with little aptitude for physical exercise, 'enrapturing the cushions by the languorous poses they adopt.' But Tintoretto's goddesses, for their part, abhor repose. They do not 'sit' for the painter. They are brisk and dashing athletes, whose blood tingles under the lash of the open air. The artist catches them in mid-career, whirling through space with the gestures of swimmers and divers. They are sisters, perhaps, to those acrobats and gymnasts whom Raymond Schwab supposes that Tintoretto had watched on the *campi,* during the frequent public festivals at Venice, giving exhibitions of 'Icarian games'. The hypothesis is rendered plausible by certain of Tintoretto's mythological paintings in which goddesses, Graces and nymphs hover unconfined and unsupported between earth and heaven, wingless and defying the laws of gravity. He sometimes causes the shadows of invisible clouds to fall upon their glorious forms, the supple arms and boldly flung legs, thus associating the mobility of space with their own. The finest and most typical of these pictures is in the hall of the Anto-Collegio in the Doges' Palace. It represents the Graces receiving Mercury. The three female figures are so arranged as to form a single flexible and flowing arabesque of curves and diagonals in which the continuity may be compared with the tied notes of a melody. This is a painting which, in the happy phrase of Paul Claudel, 'the eye hears', as caressed by the lines as is the ear by the sounds when a female singer utters in a single breath the ringing spiral modulations of a passage in *bel canto.* May not this be yet another 'picture of music'?

We are also indebted to Tintoretto for many portraits, mostly half-length, and mostly depicting old or ageing men, with features that bear the signs of both weariness and understanding of life. The most moving is that which he painted of himself when in his seventies. Here the lord of shadows seems to be taking leave of existence, as he contemplates the secrets of eternal night rising from the depths of the grave.

Tintoretto did not live, like Michelangelo, the life of a misanthrope and misogynist. The wife he married when he was forty presented him with eight children. He was devoted to his large family and took them with him on his travels. He did not seek, like Titian, the society of prominent persons, the bestowal of honours or the enjoyment of public office. 'He could never have endured fetters, even if they had been gilded and jewelled'. He was sixty-nine when the Senate commissioned him to execute a canvas seventy-four feet wide and twenty-three feet high for the Hall of the Grand Council. The picture was intended to replace an archaic fresco by Guariento. He worked alone on this painting of *Paradise*—the sketch for it is in the Louvre—for two and a half years. He had only just finished the huge composition when, on the 31st May 1594, two days after Whit Sunday, he died. He was buried in the 'parish' church of his district, that of the Madonna del Orto, which had been lavishly adorned with his own pictures.

Paolo Caliari, known as Veronese, did not serve his apprenticeship in any of the studios of respected Venetian masters, but in his native city. One may say, moreover, that he was 'born in the workshop'. His father modelled in clay and an uncle, Antonio Badile, decorated the houses of local residents with sham architectural features. The child learnt his trade rather as an artisan than as an artist. Gifted with a dexterity and facility which were never to fail him in later years, his talents were soon apparent. By the time he was sixteen his reputation as a painter in fresco was acknowledged not only at Verona and in the surrounding district, but also at Vicenza and in its environs. In these regions imposing palaces and comely villas were springing up like mushrooms under the direction of Andrea Palladio, twenty years the senior of young Caliari, who was destined, later on, to collaborate with that great man on terms of the greatest intimacy.

Meanwhile the fortunate youth, in the professional company of his compatriot Bartolommeo Zelotti and his brother Benedetto, travelled wherever the commissions he received took him. He soon proved himself the superior of his two companions, and was accordingly summoned by the Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga to Mantua. It was there that he is said to have first attempted oil painting. It was there, too, that he learned, from the frescos of Mantegna in the Palazzo da Corte and those of Giulio Romano in the Palazzo del Te, as well as from those of Correggio at Parma, all that he still needed to enable him to 'fly with his own wings' later on.

On returning to his native soil he undertook and successfully completed—still with the assistance of Zelotti and his brother—a number of important decorative works for private residences. Some of these villas happened to be near Venice. Veronese, who now considered himself capable of fulfilling any commission, was called to that city in 1553.

Certain works at the Doges' Palace, most of which were destroyed in the fire of 1577, preceded the true initiation of his career. Very shrewdly, the prior —a fellow-countryman—of the Convent of St. Sebastian entrusted to Veronese the decoration first of his sacristy and then of his church. These first attempts turned out to be masterpieces. As daring as he was skilled and as inspired as he was knowledgeable, Paolo Veronese painted canvases—the *Coronation of the Virgin*, the *Evangelists* and the *Story of Esther*—that gave an intoxicating impression of light and colour. They were so well calculated to excite the admiration of the Venetians—the aged Titian being the first to applaud them—that the unknown genius was enthusiastically adopted there and then by the citizens, who thenceforward refused to allow him to depart.

The year 1555, when a young painter of twenty-five, fresh from the mainland, executed the first of those masterpieces with which he was destined to adorn and enrich Venice in such profusion, happened also, by one of those coincidences that fate is sometimes pleased to contrive, to be the year in which an architect of seventy-six, who had come to Venice from Tuscany, offered the city of his adoption his best work. This was the *Libreria Vecchia*, which faces the Doges' Palace across the Piazzetta, displaying a frontal elevation of stately nobility, cheerful and serene. To-day Jacopo Sansovino's *Libreria* is entirely blackened by age. But to gain some idea of its original beauty we need only consult the architectural backgrounds it inspired in most, if not all, of the great compositions of Veronese. In these the representations of stone assume at times the bluish iridescence of the pearl and at times the rosy fairness of petals. Once more fate had favoured Venice by sending her, after the Greek mosaic-workers, after Gentile da Fabriano and Antonello of Messina, Jacopo Sansovino and Paolo Caliari.

The painter and the city were predestined to love each other. For nearly forty years the love-match between Venice and Veronese remained unclouded. After two brief periods of study in Rome he hardly ever again left Venice and the territories of the Most Serene Republic. It was a time when almost his entire output was to be found in the palaces, churches and convents of the city and its environs. Many of his works, since then, have gone to adorn the galleries of the rest of Italy and of Europe. But a good proportion still occupy the places for which they were designed. In the churches, for instance, of Santa Catarina at Venice, of Santa Giustina at Padua, of San Giorgio in Braida at Verona and Santa Corona at Vicenza the finest of the *Holy Conversations* of Veronese still display above the altars their expansive and luxuriant, many-coloured efflorescence, the bloom as fresh and brilliant as if they had just been placed there.

On the other hand, only one of the half-dozen *Banquets*, of prodigious size and thoroughly secular in feeling, universally admired and at one time adorning the refectories of convents at which the contemplative life was conceived as free from asceticism, remains in position. This is the *Feast of St. Gregory* at the Madonna del Monte, above Vicenza.

There is not one of the great compositions of Veronese which does not blend organically with the monument to which it is attached. This is the case of course with the frescos, permanent by nature and intention, like those inside the Villa Maser, which have the effect of doubling Palladio's frontal wall. But it is the same with compositions painted on canvas in the studio and afterwards pasted on the walls and ceilings of the halls of the Doges' Palace, where they adhere to the heavy mouldings of gilded wood in which they are framed. They cling to the building as bark clings to a tree. Thus, too, the mosaics cling to the vaults of the near-by basilica of San Marco. Contrary to the effect of Tiepolo's ceilings, which escape from the architecture, those of Veronese make no pretence of creating an illusion of space. The deception of the eye is purely conventional in their case. The *Triumph of Venice*, a master-piece, seems at first sight to be itself a vast specimen of architecture seen from below. Perfectly upright and pressing its whole weight on the ground, it only permits a glimpse of two small patches of sky above an absurd carnival palace which fills the entire width and height of the scene with its ostentatious tiers. Balconies, terraces, colonnades and entablatures are intercepted halfway up the picture by a cloud which exactly resembles one of the 'floating machines' which used to descend artificially from the flies of a theatre—representing Olympus—at the climax of a stage—spectacle in those days. Mounted upon this cloudy symbol of apotheosis, *Venezia Dea*, a blonde of striking beauty, richly dressed and endowed with ample charms, is seated, unconcerned with her giddy elevation, upon a throne battlemented like a fortress, above a dense throng of nude or clothed allegorical figures, their weight upheld by the long-suffering cloud without the least tremor or subsidence.

This eccentric tableau, showing genius in its very absurdity, would run the risk, if it lacked the irresistible magic of colour, of disturbing and intimidating the observer who looks up to it. But the colours are so glorious, gay and attractive, they form a harmony so vivid, unusual and variegated and are applied to shapes so softly substantial and glossy, that they completely relieve the Babel-like edifice, as a whole, from any disquieting effect. The colours are those of the city itself, which seem to be mirrored, by refraction, in this ceiling.

No one has ever perceived, understood and submitted to Venice more thoroughly than Veronese. He evokes its material glories in almost tangible form through his splendid human figures installed among their luxuries and riches with so superb a confidence. He also evokes the glories which are immaterial through his innumerable faint gradations of hue and the tremulous reflections which combine and replace one another on the canvas as they do on the Lagoon, thrown from the buildings on to the water and from the water to the sky. The paintings of Veronese both glow in depth and sparkle on the surface. They possess on the one hand the reassuring stability of mosaic and on the other the limpid and fragile transparencies of glassware. There is no more 'native' painting than that of this 'imported' painter.

Not much is known of the life of Veronese. We are told that 'he was rather quick-tempered, very honest, of a dignity which would not tolerate any offence to his personal pride, still less to his peace of mind. He lived, with a certain amount of pomp, in the bosom of his family and took great trouble to ensure his comfort.' As to his family, at thirty-eight he had married his cousin Elena Badile and had two sons, Carletto and Gabriele, by her. They were painters like himself and signed replicas of their father's works in Latin, with the words *Heredes Paoli.* They, in common with many others, assisted him in the execution of his vast designs for the Biblical Banquets (pp. 68, 69) which did not particularly shock the Venetians by their mundane character. But they caused Veronese to be charged with heresy by the Inquisition. He was summoned before judges who did not prove very severe. They contented themselves with requesting the 'heretic' to efface certain dwarfs, monkeys and dogs, a certain number of 'drunken Germans' and a guest who 'had the temerity to pick his teeth with his fork' in the presence of Jesus and His Mother. Veronese excused himself rather gracefully. "We painters," said he, " take the same liberties as do poets and madmen." He duly suppressed the offending passages. Then, troubling himself no more than he had before about the sacred character of the subjects he treated and their historical accuracy, he continued to depict palaces resembling those of the patricians of Venice and to fill them with men and women of high society, invited to listen to some famous quartet, in which he himself might be shown playing the 'cello, Tintoretto the viol, Bassano the flute and Titian the double-bass. Everyone would be dressed in their best. For no less than Carpaccio before him or Watteau, Manet and Courbet after him Veronese painted the life and the manners of his day, the 'modernity' of a certain level of society.

He was not old, but becoming so, and probably a little tired of designing so many gigantic settings, when he developed, in his last years, the taste and the need for painting small pictures, in which he renounced vivacity, special effects and every kind of virtuosity. Some of these are capricious mythological productions, to be treasured for their charming and exquisite technique, such as the *Finding of Moses,* which is in the Prado (p. 70). Others, inspired by religious themes, sometimes convey intensely dramatic feeling, as does the little *Calvary* in the Louvre. Others, again, are characterised by a sombre poetry, bitter and melancholy, like the *St. Antony Preaching to the Fishes*, to be seen at the Villa Borghese. This picture may well remind the observer of Delacroix.

Veronese died at the age of sixty, on the 20th April 1588, twelve years after Titian and six years before Tintoretto. Like these artists, he lies buried in his own church, that of San Sebastiano, which had seen the start of his career and at the decoration of which he continued to work, though not without interruptions, for nearly twenty years.

The sixteenth century, the Golden Age of Venetian painting, owes its prestige to the masterpieces of a few men of genius. On taking leave of Titian, Tintoretto and Veronese, the 'favourites of the Eternal Father', we abandon the heights to find, on various levels of the descent, a number of fine and worthy artists, fastidious or engaging in their styles, eccentric or disciples of the masters. They are to be distinguished, on account of their individual talents, from the horde of servile imitators and indolent producers of *pastiche*. All of them participated more or less in the renown of the Venetian school, though all—no unprecedented feature, this—came from the provinces. They included at least one foreigner, the Dalmatian Andrea Medolla, a mannerist whose work was often exquisite. He was attracted by the elongations and refinements applied by Parmigiano to the human figure and wrapped it in a kind of golden mist, voluptuously fragmentary.

In the various districts and towns ruled by the Lion of St. Mark several schools of painting arose in the course of the centuries. Though related to the Venetian, they by no means cast off their local virtues. At Brescia and at Bergamo painters were Venetian by contagion rather than by temperament. They had little imagination and respected the plain truth. Confident and steady practitioners, they tended, naturally, to excel in portraiture. Thus we have the sober and faithful portraits, which are sometimes admirable, by Alessandro Bonvincino, called Moretto. There are also, in particular, those by his pupil, Gian Battista Moroni, a better harmonist than colourist, who modulated the subtlest and most delicate tones of grey, from black to silver.

To the south of the Republic, in the adjacent little duchy of Ferrara, an isolated figure, that of Dosso Dossi, combined a romantic imagination which owed much to Giorgione with a very personal feeling for nature. In his great wooded landscapes, under a subdued light, one guesses at streams and seems to catch the scents of moss and ferns. There Dossi disguises some athletic and handsome young peasant as Apollo, though instead of pursuing Daphne the god plays, in the vain hope of arresting her flight, a sentimental piece on the violin. Or the artist may dress some stout young woman, who looks like a nurse, in parti-coloured, tawdry finery and turn her into a witch, own sister to the Armide of Ariosto, who was Dossi's compatriot and friend.

In the Friuli region a family of painters, Jacopo da Ponte and his four sons, worked in the Venetian style, though they never left their province. Jacopo, who might be called a regional painter, was seldom away from the town from which he ultimately derived his name, Bassano. It was an important agricultural centre, lying in the heart of a fertile, well cultivated district, studded with prosperous farms. Market-days were frequent and on a considerable scale. They swarmed with models for the da Ponte family. Modern art historians maintain that Jacopo can only be regarded as a religious painter. Yet it is in his rustic pictures (p. 78) that he figures as an innovator. His representations of sheep-folds and poultry-yards proved so popular that in order to meet the demand for them his sons, after the father's death, went in for mass production of the scenes in question, with unfortunate results. A good Bassano, which is nearly always by Jacopo, succeeds less by the realism with which the subject is treated than by its purely pictorial elements, the beauty of an *impasto* skilfully handled to resemble the oily density of enamel or the poetic quality of a chiaroscuro tinged with emerald and glowing with specks of colour that are as mysteriously opulent and deeply radiant as jewels.

By the end of the sixteenth century, which we have now reached, the *genre* paintings of the Bassani foreshadow the European naturalism of the next hundred years.

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

The Venetian School, which had been proceeding from strength to strength, suddenly came to an end. Did it die or pretend to do so? It did neither. The fact was that Venice, sure of her fame, decided to rest awhile and enjoy it. The ensuing century, for the Venetians, passed in the form of a prolonged 'reception'. We may imagine the city, as Veronese presented her in the ceiling-painting discussed above, enthroned at her noonday hour in the heart of the Lagoon, surrounded by the painters who had made her, for two hundred years, the capital of the 'new style'. Thus supported, she welcomed, like a queen, the visitors attracted by her renown from all Europe, including Italy itself.

The functions are henceforth reversed. The pupil has become a master. It is now his turn to teach others, as others had taught him in the past. Venice repaid, several times over, the gifts she had received. She no longer ruled the waves. She was about to lose her continental dominions. But she retained her artistic omnipotence, universally recognised.

We should be exceeding our brief if we undertook an inventory of the conquest of Europe by the Venetian school in the course of the seventeenth century. We may nevertheless summarily take note, in parenthesis, of the best known painters to whom Venice then delegated, so to speak, the transmission of her glory. To a greater or lesser extent they all owed their achievement to her. The eldest of adopted children came from the very district where the mosaic-workers had arrived to initiate her career. The old debt of gratitude which Venice owed to Byzantium was royally paid when she turned an obscure icon-illuminator, born in Candia, into a painter of genius. It was at Venice that Theotokopoulos the Greek became Domenico El Greco. The Cretan kept throughout his life, even after he had reached the first rank among Spanish painters, the Italian name which Venice had given him. His first works were so Venetian in conception and execution that some of them were for long attributed to Tintoretto or Bassano. Nor did Greco ever quite lose his Venetian style either at Madrid or Toledo.

The influence of Venice on Caravaggio, Annibale Carracci and Guercino, the three Italians who came to the city after El Greco, was less permanent and ineradicable. But in the case of Caravaggio at any rate the part played by Giorgione in his development is generally admitted. Annibale Carracci was saved by Veronese, whom he considered the 'greatest man in the world', from succumbing to the redoubtable Michelangelo at the Farnese Palace. And Guercino owed to his Venetian friends the quality of his chiaroscuro and his sumptuous colouring.

Caravaggio was seventeen and Annibale twenty at the time of their visit to

Venice. Rubens was hardly older when, at the dawn of the century, in May 1600, he broke away from Antwerp—on horseback—and made off at full speed for Italy, in other words Venice. It was there that he immediately swore allegiance to Titian. To the day of his death he always had Titian in mind. Many of his works were directly inspired by the latter. Many are pure reminiscences or actual copies of Titian's pictures. It was Rubens who persuaded the young Van Dyck to go to Venice and Rubens who, while ambassador at the Spanish Court, gave the young Velasquez the same advice.

As for the French, we might well cite fifty names. After 1666 they were nearly all in receipt of allowances from the King. But neither Poussin nor Watteau would figure in the list. These artists did not go to Venice. But the former when he at last left, at the age of over thirty, for Rome, was at first more struck by the works of Titian than by those of Raphael, which he had come to study. At the Villa Ludovisi he copied, in addition to Bellini's *Feast of the Gods* (p. 56), Titian's *Bacchanal* and *Worship of Venus* (now in the Prado). He turned sculptor to model in clay the Cupids who play round the goddess in the latter picture. Twenty paintings by Poussin—in his 'first manner'—are redolent of Titian's voluptuous and sensual style. They exemplify the full flowering of the Frenchman's genius.

Watteau, for his part, never visited Italy. On the other hand he lived with Crozat in Paris, studying and copying at his leisure the numerous Venetian drawings his host had collected. Crozat's house stood in the rue de Richelieu, at an intersection of the boulevards only a short distance from the building in which the duc d'Antin, Superintendent of Works, kept a number of the finest paintings owned by the King. As René Huyghe reminds us, one of these pictures was, at that date (1715), the *Concert Champêtre*. What more plausible conjecture than that Giorgione and Watteau, spiritual brothers, addicted to the same dreams and longings, should have sometimes engaged in intimate colloquy at the Hôtel d'Antin? We may wager that Watteau never forgot the *Concert Champêtre*. Who knows whether some 'picture of music'—say the *Pleasures of Life*—may not owe its existence to the 'picture of music' by the Venetian painter-poet? It is difficult not to yield to the suggestion, at any rate to the extent of speculation, if not of admission.

But it is high time to close this parenthesis. What was happening at Venice during this long interval? Were there not, throughout the seventeenth century, a few artists capable of keeping alight, beneath the ashes, the embers of a fire that had been damped down? Undoubtedly. But they were minor artists and, as so often before, foreigners! Bernardo Strozzi was a Genoese, Domenico Feti a Roman, Giovanni Lys a Fleming and Sebastiano Mazzoni a Florentine. They were most adroit and well trained. But they did little more than ring the changes, not without spirit, on themes discreetly borrowed from greater men. Two Venetians from the mainland, however, the Paduan Alessandro Varotari and Francesco Maffei from Vicenza, were good disciples. They did not capsize in the wake of their masters. The *Marriage at Cana* by Varotari compares with Veronese's picture as moonlight with sunlight. As for Maffei, he gave a 'baroque' turn to Veronese and Tintoretto alternately. By overdoing their 'effects' he sometimes seems to parody them.

Was there, then, no actual citizen of Venice worth mentioning during this century? There was, but one only. Zanantonio Fumiani (1645—1710) is today as totally and unjustly forgotten as the magnificent and grandiose composition with which he decorated the vast ceiling of a local church, that of San Pantaleone. This unknown masterpiece has been left to die of neglect and lack of interest. But it constitutes an impressive link between Tintoretto and Veronese, from both of whom Fumiani derives, and Tiepolo, whom he foreshadows.

State Museum,
LUCKNOW.

THE LAST ACT

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

THE NEW CIRCUMSTANCE which gives a special character to Venetian painting in this last century of its existence is the sudden and complete disappearance of artists who are not strictly and wholly Venetian. It now looks as though Venice, conscious of her approaching end, desired to have only legitimate children, 'pureblooded' Venetians, at her bedside to comfort and honour her in her final hours. Providence met her wishes most generously. For the dying city was accorded not only great native painters of fine quality, but also musicians and writers of equal rank. Vivaldi, Marcello, Albinoni, the composers, as well as the authors Goldoni and the brothers Gozzi, were contemporaries, within a few years, of the painters now to receive our attention.

As they were all born in the same place they seem to have a family resemblance. Some really were relatives. The two Longhi were brothers, the two Ricci and the two Canaletti were uncle and nephew. Rosalba was the sister-in-law of Alessandro Pellegrini. The marriage of the sister of the three Guardi to Giovanni Battista Tiepolo produced two sons who assisted their father in his work.

There were no serious rivalries or embittered animosities among all these artists, who appear to have tacitly agreed to devote their labours to Venice alone, their common mother. While some represented, with precise fidelity, the beauties of her monuments and picturesque aspects, others mirrored her public and private manners. The greatest of them sang the praises of Venice to high heaven, till she disappeared into the blue itself, deified at the summit of a dizzy, Olympian ascent.

A hundred and two years after the death of Tintoretto, a hundred and eight after the death of Veronese, their authentic descendant, Giambattista Tiepolo, was born, in 1696, in the Castello district, near the Arsenal. His father was a merchant captain. Accordingly, Giambattista lived in his infancy at the extreme eastern end of the city, where the Lagoon, beyond the scattered isles, joins the open Adriatic under a great expanse of sky, filled with restless clouds and beams of light. The magical effects of Nature in this region cast a permanent spell on the child's imagination as he watched them. His first teacher was Gregorio Lazzarini, a decorator. Being a clever and skilled practitioner of perspective, he taught his pupil the various tricks of his trade, without injury to the talent for colour organisation which soon developed in the boy through the study of Veronese and the example of his immediate seniors Sebastiano Ricci and G. B. Piazzetta. At the age of eighteen Tiepolo, by his first works at the Ospedaletto, 'entered the promised land.' He was congratulated as heartily and in the same fashion as had been the young Tintoretto and the young Veronese. Was there ever at Venice, the city so devoted, generation after generation, to fine painting, a good painter who remained unrecognised? We may regard Lotto as the exception who proves the rule. Venice welcomed the youthful Tiepolo, without hesitation, as the heir of a mighty line. The citizens vied with one another in begging him to work for churches, palaces and villas. The missing link in a golden chain thought to have been broken for ever had been recovered. Once more the blood of youth was circulating in veins thought to have been blocked for ever. Tiepolo found himself famous, 'the most famous of virtuosi'. He hardly ever left Venice and the towns of northern Italy, such as Udine, Milan, Vicenza, Verona, Este and Bergamo, except to spend two years, half way through his life, in Franconia, where he decorated a castle with great splendour, and six years, for the same purpose, in his hale old age, at Madrid, where he died in his seventies. He never stopped painting 'abundantly, prodigally, easily, joyfully and knowledgeably'. He painted altar-pieces and secular pictures, frescos and, above all, designs for ceilings (p. 83). For the first time, in these most novel, bold and 'modern' ceiling compositions, it was not the sky which was related to the figures, but the figures which were related to the sky, were born of it and lived only in and by reason of it. Tiepolo's understanding of aerial perspective enabled him to make light of the solution of the most baffling and arduous problems. His heavenly personages are endowed with the miraculous faculty, not of flying through the sky—for except for the angels few of these privileged beings are equipped with wings—but of making themselves quite at home there. They strut from one cloud to another, and chase one another from one tumble to the next. They are handsome, happy and free denizens of the upper air, where they live at their ease. There is no ceiling by Tiepolo in which the sky is not out of human reach and no inhabitants of his skies who show any inclination to leave them for the world below. Tiepolo's people snap their fingers at mankind. Space is the element in which they thrive. They can no more do without it than fish can do without water.

In spite of the ineffable charm of the ceiling at the *Scuola dei Carmini*—painted in oils—and the supreme elegance of the reduced proportions of those at the Palazzo Rezzonico, the finest and most important of Tiepolo's ceilings are not, perhaps, to be found in Venice, but at Milan, which possesses *The Course of the Sun* at the Palazzo Clerici, at Würzburg which has *Olympus and the Four Elements* and at Madrid *The Triumph of the Spanish Monarchy*. I do not believe there are any more beautiful ceilings than these in the world, nor any so radiant with genius. Like the rest—with the exception noted above—they are painted in fresco. This procedure demands a rapidity and assurance of execution which forbid drafting, sketching, retouching and second thoughts. The work must be undertaken, pursued and finished on a single impulse, before the layer of fresh mortar, which greedily absorbs the colouring matter, dries out. Furthermore, a fresco can only be painted passage by passage, each in its entirety, over huge areas, so that it is not possible to judge the effect of the whole while the work is in progress. The vault of the great staircase at Würzburg is about fifty-eight feet wide and ninety-seven feet long, thus comprising an area of some six hundred and twenty-five square yards. The vault of the Throne Room at Madrid is even vaster. The imaginative and executive faculties of the fresco painter must therefore be exercised simultaneously. Tiepolo possessed both these faculties in sovereign measure.

If the poetic world created by Tiepolo carries immediate and unhesitating conviction, the reason is that his world is primarily plastic and pictorial. He can do no wrong because all he does is justified and warranted by the infallibility of the technique and execution. "It is not only innate qualities," said Goethe, "which make an exceptional man, but also those acquired." Like all other great painters in great periods Tiepolo was a member of the race of artist-artisans. He could rely as much on his manual skill as any past master of a trade who fits the components of a piece of furniture together, weaves the silk of a length of tapestry or engraves the gold of a cup. Everything Tiepolo knew enabled him to do what he wished and gave everything he did the instant appeal of apparent facility and improvisation. The shock of pleasure one experiences at the first sight of these wonderful ceilings is like that felt at dawn on a fine day when a window is opened upon some vast horizon flooded with light. On those occasions one may have a vision—at any rate if one knows and loves the work of Tiepolo—to make the heart beat faster. It will be of one of those exquisite and delicious feminine figures enthroned upon the most beautiful of the clouds floating in the upper air, all goddesses or fairies, in one state or another of undress, long-limbed and slender, somewhat haughty in their elegance, almost always giving the impression of a mysterious and calm solemnity. Their model seems to have been, on the evidence of many drawings made of her, the young and charming Cristina, whom Tiepolo is said to have loved, as she loved him. We are told, further, that she was a Venetian, the daughter of a gondolier. But she certainly differed, both in complexion and temperament, from her ancestresses, with their well developed figures and slight tendency to inflammation of the tissues, who had posed for Veronese a hundred years earlier.

Tiepolo did not only paint ceilings. Some of his frescos invaded walls both as horizontal and as vertical structures. Thus, at Venice, in the *salone da ballo* of the Labia Palace, above the high arches contrived in a bewildering complexity of sham architectural features, he placed the *Embarcation* and *Banquet of Cleopatra* (p. 82). They are admirable examples of artistic audacity which thoroughly deserve their fame and there is no doubt about their magnificence. And yet their virtuosity is somewhat obtrusive. But this criticism cannot be made of the delicate and entrancing series of frescos which decorate the unpretentious rooms on the ground floor of the Villa Valmarana, which stands in the Berici Montains above Vicenza. They are romantic illustrations of scenes from the Iliad, the Aeneid, the *Orlando Furioso* and the *Gerusalemme Liberata*. Their luminous brilliance reinforces that of the flowers in the garden seen from window after window, thus apparently reflecting the landscape in magic mirrors. Just as in fairy-tale, the illusions of a May morning have been converted by enchantment into the forms of delightful young people, a poet's visions of girlhood, improvising the most amusing comedies, the most graceful dances, as the sun mounts higher. Everything is weightless. All the shadows are dimly blue, golden, rosy or lilac-coloured. No other painter in fresco, with the possible exception of Piero della Francesca—to whom, however, there can be no question of relating Tiepolo—possessed to this extent the gift of etherealising the elements of a painting and capturing the variety of degree in the most fragile, fugitive and unstable hues.

All Tiepolo's decorative compositions, with the exception of that of the *Carmini,* are frescos. When he painted in oils he gave himself up, on being released from the shackles of a procedure which allowed no compromise, to the pleasure of employing, in complete freedom and with great relish, a medium that not only permits but actually encourages the most impulsive caprices of hand and spirit. His stupendous powers of production enabled him to leave innumerable oil paintings behind him. They are all of outdoor scenes. When he abandoned his ceilings he did not for that reason take leave of the sky. It is usually the main feature of the whole work. If, by way of exception, an interior is represented, its architecture is always left more or less open to the heavens. In every one of Tiepolo's pictures a patch of sky, of more or less extent, is always visible. It might almost be called his signature.

He worked from memory, in the studio. In his day painters hardly ever went in search of their themes out of doors. Yet his painting is *plein air* nearly as much as any 'impression' by Claude Monet. Two centuries before Tiepolo's time Leonardo had said 'The air paints', though in his own works we are not conscious of filling our lungs.

Tiepolo's oil paintings can be divided into three categories. The first is that of the sketches in which the artist lightly and impetuously jots down, with the tip of the brush, the preliminary ideas for his great compositions. The second is that of his easel paintings, which bear the same relation to the larger works as a sonnet to an epic. Most of Tiepolo's pictures in this category play capricious variations, in which the resources of his invention appear inexhaustible, upon subjects taken from antique fable, history and the romances of chivalry. He rarely dwells upon scenes of contemporary life, which he left, as we shall see, to his son Domenico. The third category is that of the pictures for churches. These contradict the notion generally—and thoughtlessly—entertained that Tiepolo was incurably addicted to virtuosity. He is often supposed to be a kind of acrobat, a tight-rope walker of painting. He figures as an astounding expert in pyrotechnics, a showman of genius, but incapable of any intense or sincere inner feeling, of yielding to the dictates of the heart. Yet a pious and fervent spirit, deeply and frankly Christian, is revealed in these works. Some are supreme expressions of Christianity, like the *Virgin and Three Saints* at the Gesuati, the *Communion of Santa Lucia* at the Santi Apostoli and the *Martyrdom of Saint Agatha* in the Berlin Museum. They call to mind the celestial cadences of certain passages by Mozart. Others effectively illustrate the dramatic and stirring aspects of the Christian story, such as the triptych of the *Crucifixion* at St. Alvise and *St. Thecla Saving her City from the Plague* in the cathedral at Este. These sombre masterpieces have a disturbing beauty which marks their creator as the heir of Tintoretto.

Tiepolo had an influence on two younger men of importance and high achievement, Goya and Fragonard.

At the time of Tiepolo's residence at Madrid Goya was sixteen, entirely obscure and unknown. It is very unlikely that he knew Tiepolo then. But later, when

Goya had become celebrated and was employed as an official painter, he was able to study at his leisure the ceilings at the Royal Palace. With the licence of genius he took them for his inspiration when, at fifty-two, he first worked in fresco, decorating the dome of San Antonio de la Florida in this style. He was similarly inspired when, in 1778, he produced his first etching, derived from the *Schezzi di Fantasia* which Giambattista had engraved while at Madrid. As to Fragonard, he never knew Tiepolo, any more than did Goya. For the Italian was in Spain when Fragonard broke his journey at Venice on his way back to France after seven years in Italy. He became infatuated however with Tiepolo's works, especially his most recent paintings at the Rezzonico and Labia palaces. He studied and copied the pictures of the master and never forgot them.

Compared with Tiepolo, the 'last great incarnation of the pictorial genius of Italy, the equal of the masters of the Renaissance,' (Focillon), most of the other painters of the eighteenth century, from Rosalba to J. B. Pittoni, from Jacopo Amigoni to Alessandro Pellegrini and from Giuseppe Nogari to Giuseppe Angeli (p. 84), may be regarded as minor artists. Nevertheless, the part played by these *vedutiste* in the history of modern painting should not be minimised and is certainly not negligible. They were the first to abandon the historical, 'made up' landscape for that taken direct from Nature. It was they who spread the taste for it throughout Europe. It is true that the Dutch had been first in this field. But the Venetian painters were favoured by the fact that their theme was Venice. The wondrous, enchanting city and its far-famed Carnival was then attracting the entire world to the Lagoon. None of these visitors ever left without some *veduta* of moderate size and facile execution, the proved fidelity of which kept alive, in the austere north, the recollection of vanished delights. There was a great deal of trade in such *vedute* between Venice and England. A certain Consul Smith despatched dozens of them to his native land, where they were eagerly bought up. The import of pictures by foreign countries was followed by invitations to the painters themselves. Canaletto went off to work in London. His nephew Bellotto painted successively in Dresden, Vienna and Warsaw.

In this devoting themselves to the representation of their city these artists resumed an ancient practice. As we have seen, the earliest Venetian painters, in the fifteenth century, such as Carpaccio, the Bellinis, Bastiani and others, left pictorial 'chronicles' of the Venice of their day. And although Giorgione and his followers, together with Titian, Veronese and others, included only views of the mainland in their pictures, they nevertheless all excelled as landscape painters. That tradition had never been lost sight of.

It was a 'Venetian' of Dalmatian origin, but born in Udine, Luca Carlovaris, who first painted views of Venice. Arriving in Rome at a very early age, he was initiated into 'pure' landscape painting by specialists in 'ruins' like Locatelli and practitioners of perspective like Pannini. On his return to the Lagoon he initiated in his turn, during the first years of the century, Canaletto, who had begun as a theatrical scene-painter, like his father. But he soon turned from this work to 'Venetian Perspectives'. He was so frequently imitated and copied that even in his lifetime there were more counterfeit than genuine Canalettos in the market.

He depicted the monuments of the city with scrupulous exactitude (pp. 86, 87) without attempting to promote his reputation by feats of technique. In contemplating a fine Canaletto we are always reminded of Corot, whom he foreshadows. Reciprocally, Corot himself sometimes recalled Canaletto, whom he placed 'very high', as his Notebooks testify.

Though Canaletto had many obscure and worthless imitators, he also had some pupils of talent. The works of a few of them can be distinguished from his own. There were those of his nephew Bellotto (p. 88), for example, in his rather prosaic and chilly style, or Michele Marieschi, who died too young to prove himself, or, in particular, Francesco Guardi (pp. 90, 91), fifteen years Canaletto's junior and sixteen that of Tiepolo, who was Guardi's brother-in-law.

Guardi owed much to both men. In his first works his 'Canalettismo' is still so flagrant that to-day, when Guardi's reputation has soared, dealers readily attribute to him works previously considered to be by Canaletto. But in a short time the extraordinarily delicate, diaphanous and mobile light characteristic of Tiepolo's skies gradually came to permeate Guardi's *vedute*. The latter's style grew freer, lighter and less earth-bound. He became less and less concerned with the cold-blooded reproduction of the monuments of Venice in their literal truth on his canvases and more with the painting of that incessantly varying web of water, air and light that lies along the Lagoon.

The longer Guardi lived the more sensitive he became. His painting ceased to be earth-bound in any sense. A wind of fantasy blows through his charming and witty *pozzetti* and detaches, as if they were petals, the thousand tiny specks of colour with which they are studded. The painter of landscape was succeeded by the painter of whimsical fancies. Controlling his rapid and impatient brush-strokes with a sure hand, he would capture the gliding motion of a solitary gondola on the Lagoon or the pacific manœuvres of the great beflagged war-galleys that stalked over its surface like fabulous birds. Or again he would flush, on the squares, quays and *campi* of his beloved Venice, those coveys of multi-coloured little persons, like fluttering swarms of human flies ready, it seems, to dart suddenly and all together into the air, as do the pigeons in St. Mark's Square when the midday gun booms.

Neither the pigeons nor the Venetians themselves ever fly very far. The latter might now be seen at home, posing, with great amiability and much dignity, for their duly qualified portrait painter. Pietro Longhi has left a number of drawings of dazzling animation and elegance. They are comparable with those of Watteau. But Longhi can hardly be held, as is sometimes suggested, to rival Chardin as a painter of interiors. His style is simple and scrupulous, with a not unattractive awkwardness about it, as he invites us to enter his typically Venetian dwellings, somewhat plain and bare, and yet neither poverty-stricken nor shabby. Their occupants are not patricians, but minor nobles and burgesses, such as Goldoni presents in his plays. There is family music-making. The doctor, the hairdresser and the milliner call and are welcomed with easy courtesy. The daughter of the house takes a lesson in dancing and the youngest baby learns to walk. If these people go out, it will be to visit the apothecary, the notary or the perfume-shop. Or they may make an excursion to one of the islands in the Lagoon to enjoy the hospitality of a convent parlour. The nuns are not very strictly cloistered and converse with their visitors through the light lattices of their cells. On the return journey a visit may be paid to the 'genuine African rhinoceros' (p. 89) or the Irish giant Mc Grath, seven feet high and weighing four hundred and twenty pounds. But will they not go to the Carnival? you may ask. Surely they will be seen at the 'famous Carnival of Venice' which holds sway in the city six months out of the twelve! But the fact is that the small world of Longhi's small pictures does not seem to have troubled itself much about the Carnival. Yet one may catch a glimpse here and there of the silhouettes of a few men and women disguised in the folds of the ample *bauta* of unrelieved black and the compulsory, spectral mask of unrelieved white. The impression they make in this uniform is, to be frank, not a very cheerful one. But the sedentary Longhi was not the man to paint the wild revels which Venice offered to all Europe, attended at the height of their vogue, if we are to believe Cardinal de Bernis, the Ambassador of France and friend of Casanova, by a throng of more than fifty thousand masks in the Piazza alone. Still, there were those who did illustrate the Carnival. There were the two Tiepolos, among others, and in particular the son, Domenico. Their paintings, drawings and engravings on this subject are well worth a visit to the Cà Rezzonico, the fine palace built by Longhena on the Grand Canal. The edifice is now the tabernacle of the *settecento,* though perhaps it should rather be called the reliquary of that century. For in it are deposited the relics of a Venice now no more, a Venice that for nearly a hundred years had worn a mask to hide from the world and from herself, her approaching death.

When, on the 16th October 1797, the treaty of Campo-Formio made the Most Serene Republic the slave of Austria, those Venetians whose genius or talent had enveloped the city in a final blaze of glory, crowning her with the flowers of a closing Indian summer, were no more. Neither the elder Tiepolo, who had died in Madrid, nor the Canalettos, one of whom had died in Warsaw, nor Rosalba, who had died blind and mad, nor Francesco Guardi, dead at over eighty in poverty and loneliness, had survived. Nor had that engraver of genius, Giambattista Piranesi, who deserves at least mention at this point. He and Tiepolo were the greatest artists of this century. Piranesi was born in Venice, though he died in Rome. The only one who lived on was the younger Tiepolo. He had retired to Mira, a town only a short distance from Venice, and occupied there the small Villa Zianigo, which his father had bought in former days with the fees earned at Würzburg. The old man remained in the villa till his death in 1804, covering all its walls, from floor to ceiling, with a series of fanciful frescos, today preserved at the Rezzonico. Hundreds of figures, exclusively of clowns and buffoons (p. 92), all misshapen and grimacing, all clothed in white, are shown writhing and capering convulsively, in the grip of an atrocious, harrowing parody of gaiety. The last work of the great Venetian School, which did honour to mankind, imposed a Dance of Death, a mocking ballet of phantoms, upon the city's tomb.

PLATES

State Museum,
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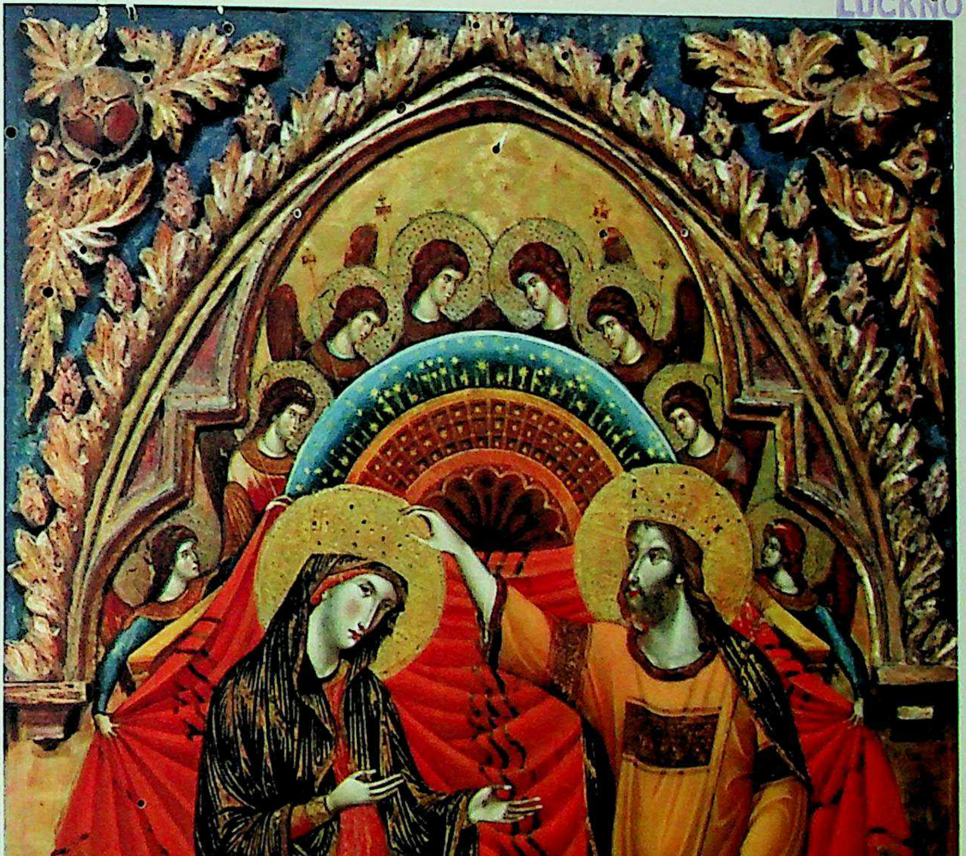
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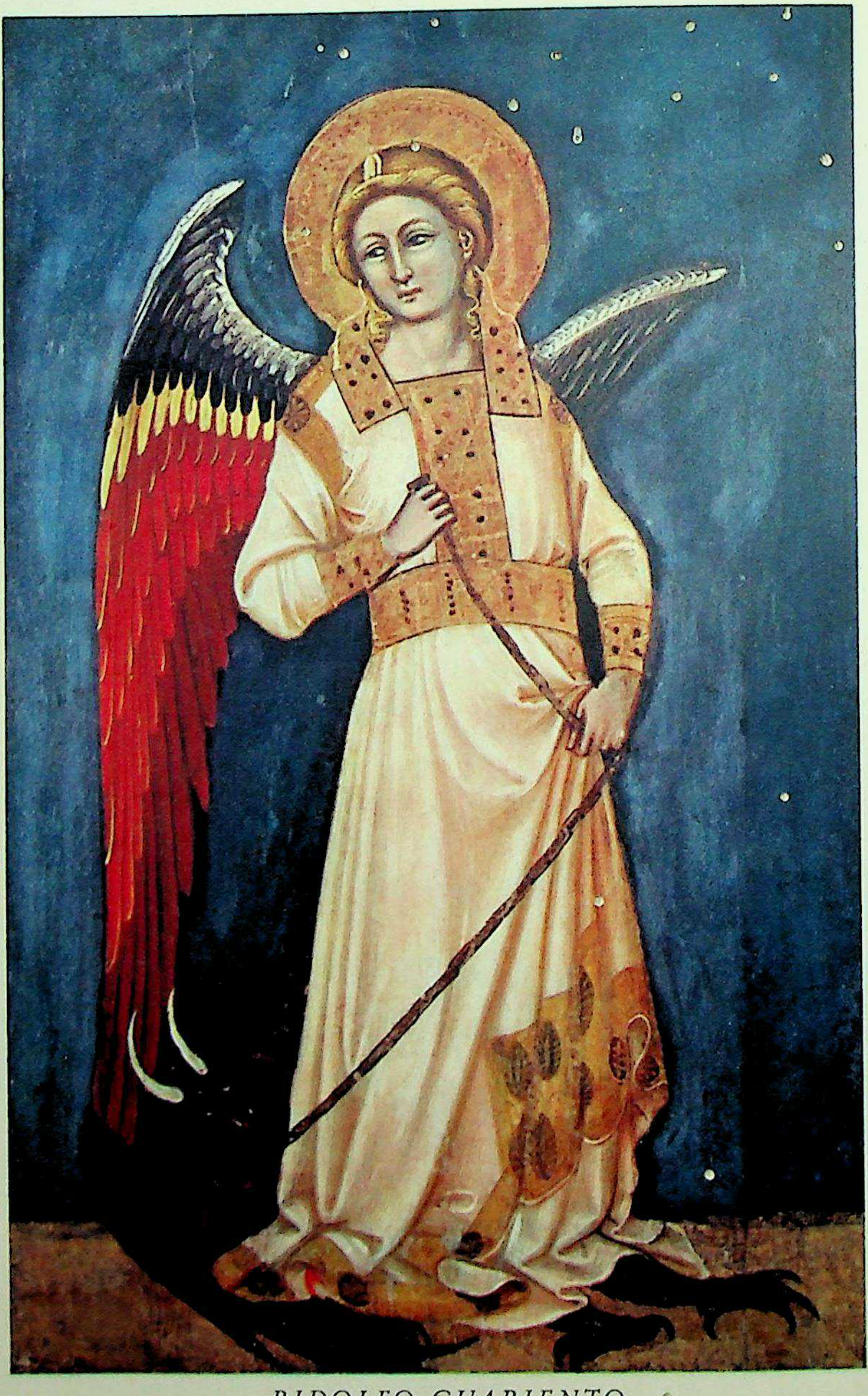
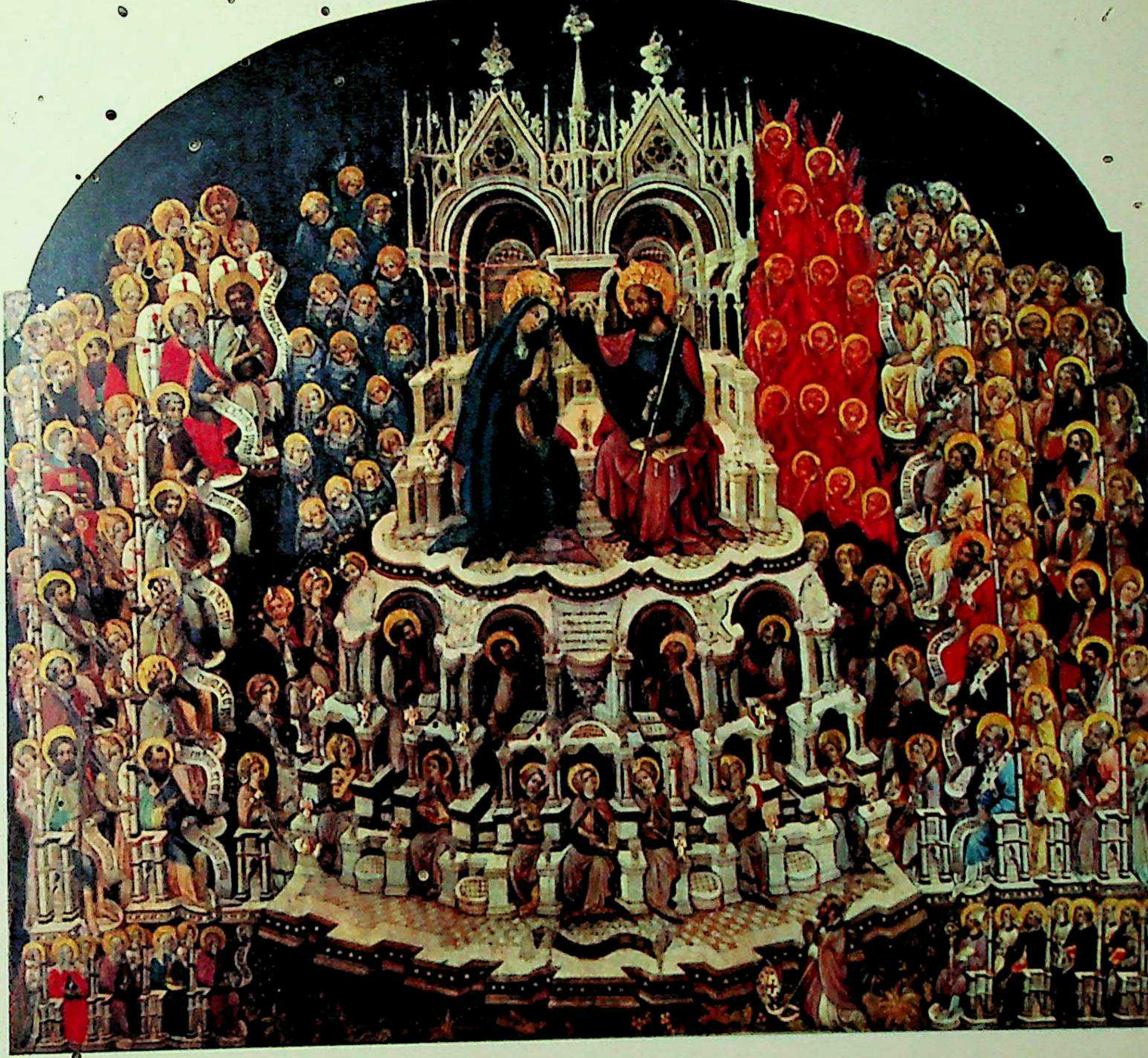
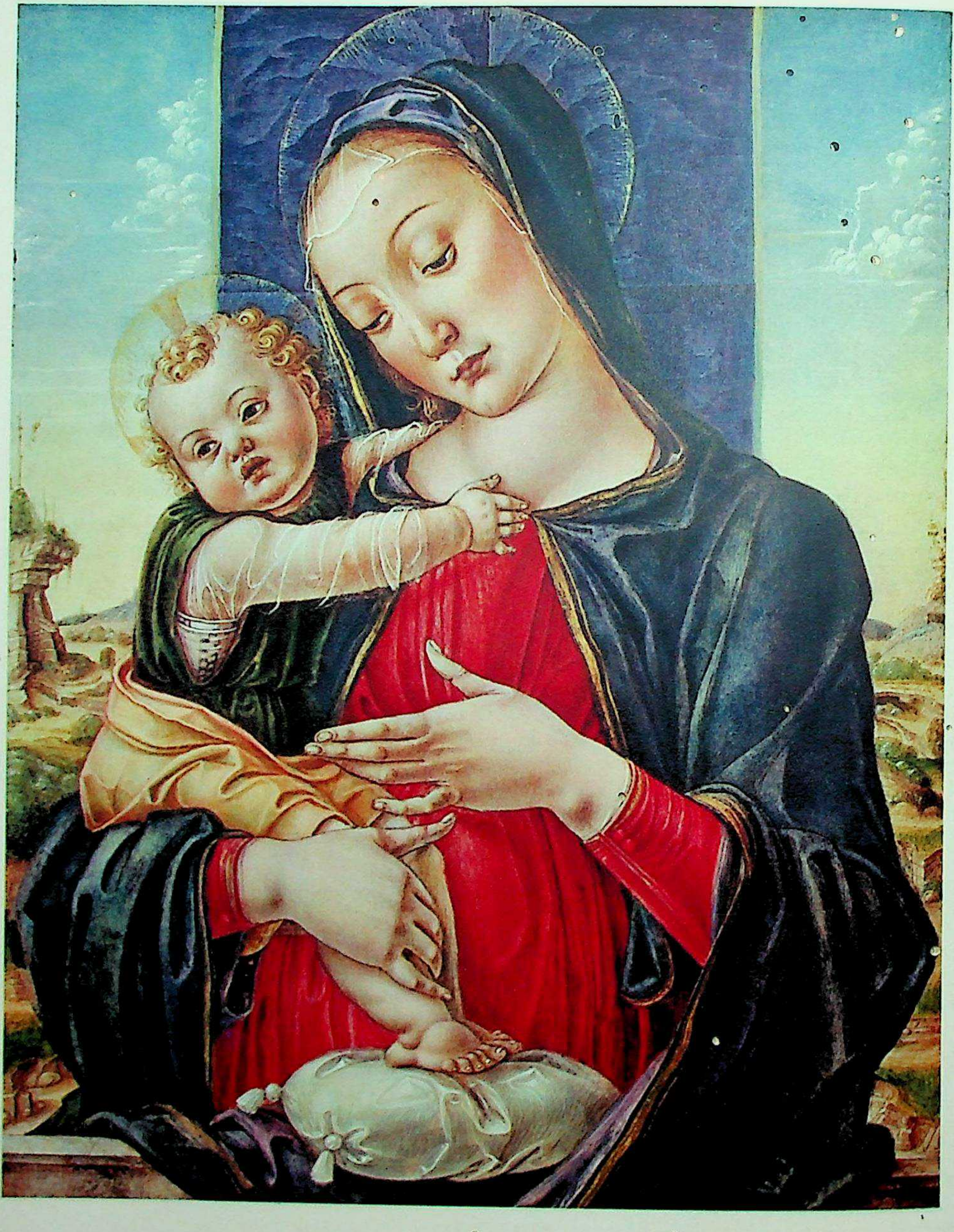
PAOLO VENEZIANO
CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN 1324
National Gallery of Art, Washington



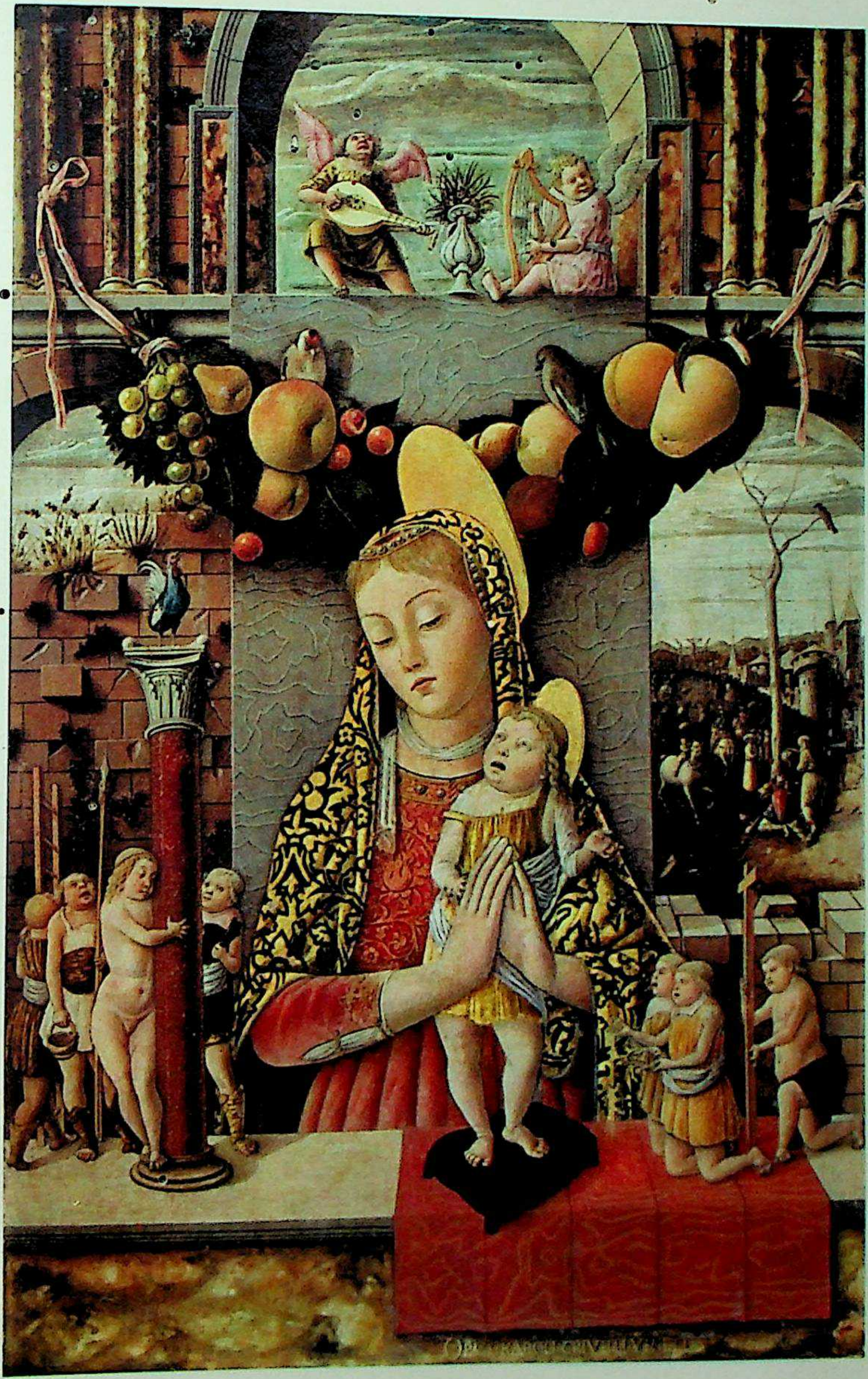
RIDOLFO GUARIENTO
ANGEL AND DEMON c. 1340
Museo Civico, Padua



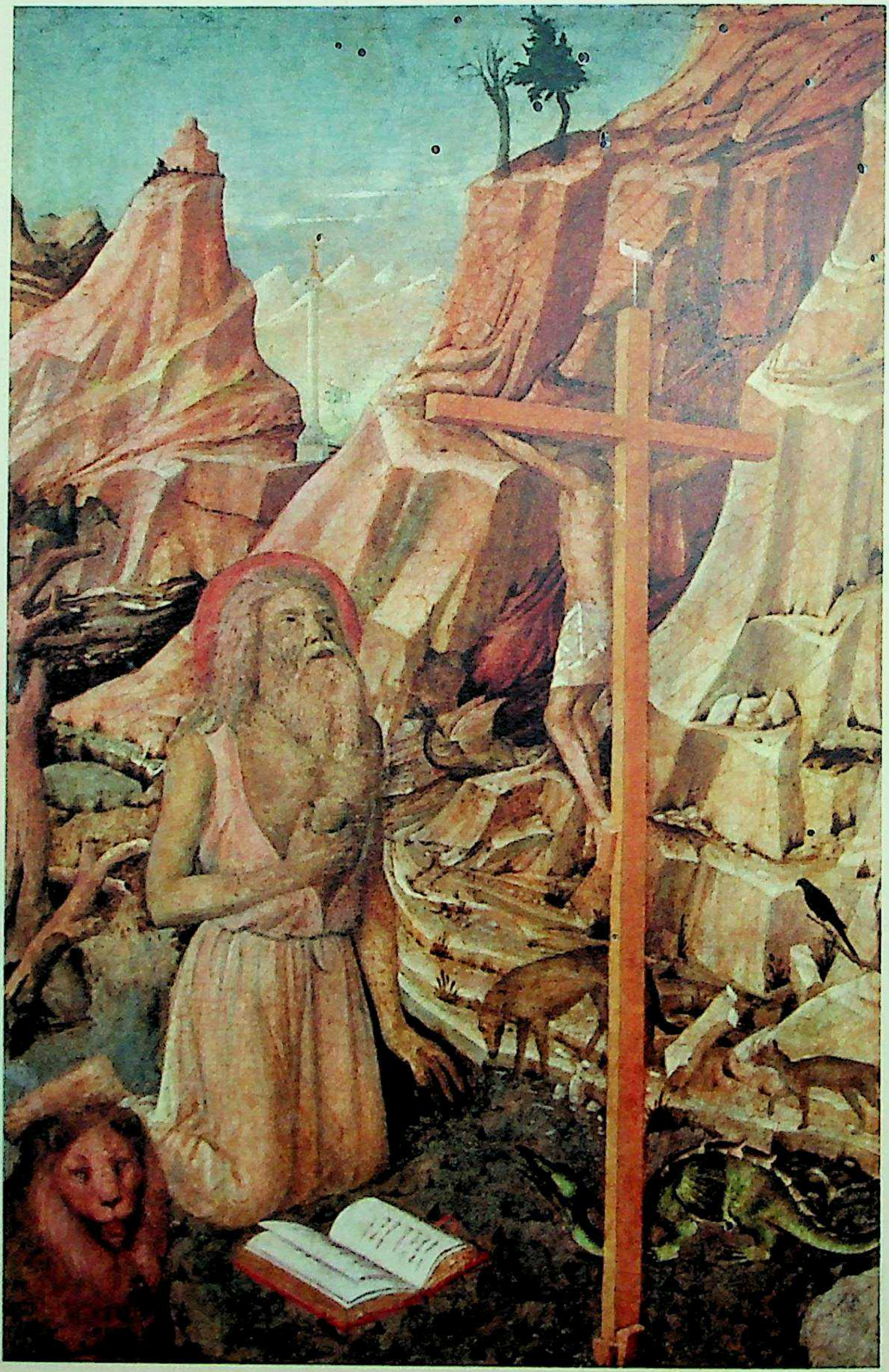
JACOBELLO DEL FIORE
CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN 1438
Accademia, Venice



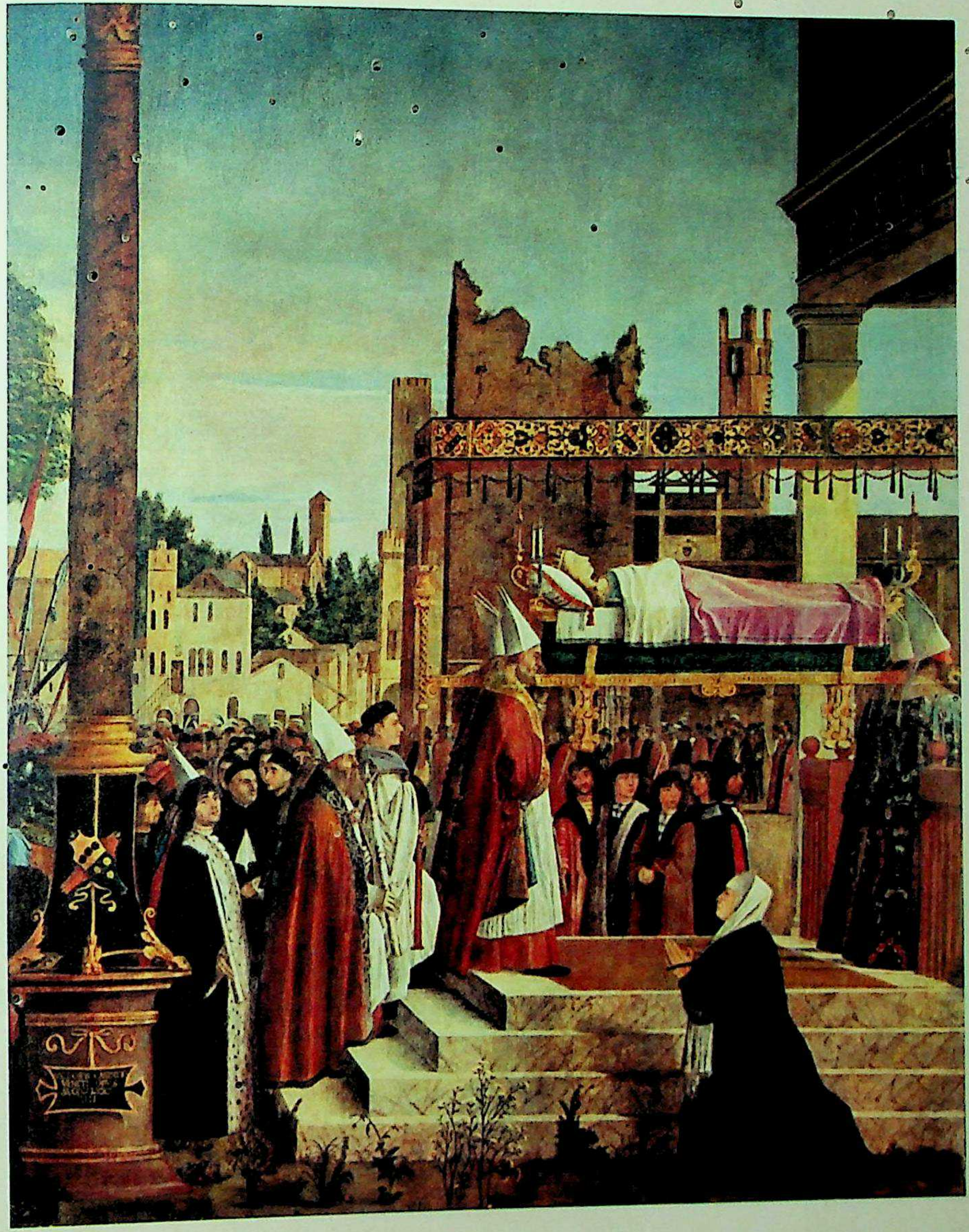
BARTOLOMMEO VIVARINI
VIRGIN AND CHILD c. 1470
National Gallery of Art, Washington



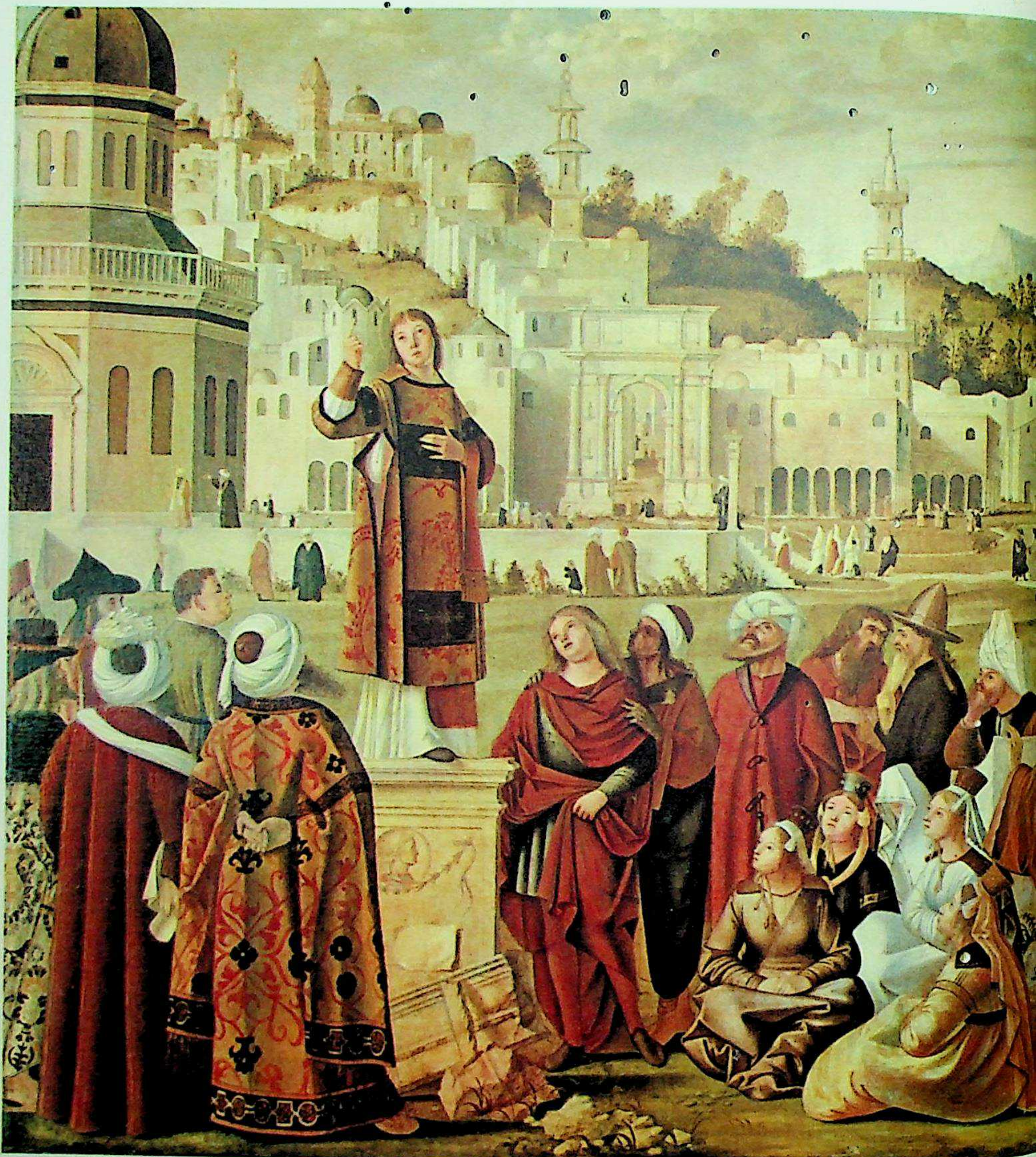
CARLO CRIVELLI
MADONNA OF THE PASSION c. 1463
Museo Civico, Verona



JACOPO BELLINI
ST. JEROME IN PENITENCE
Museo Civico, Verona



VITTORE CARPACCIO
STORY OF ST. URSULA (DETAIL) 1490–5
Accademia, Venice



VITTORE CARPACCIO
St. Stephen preaching to the People 1511–15
Louvre, Paris

State Museum,
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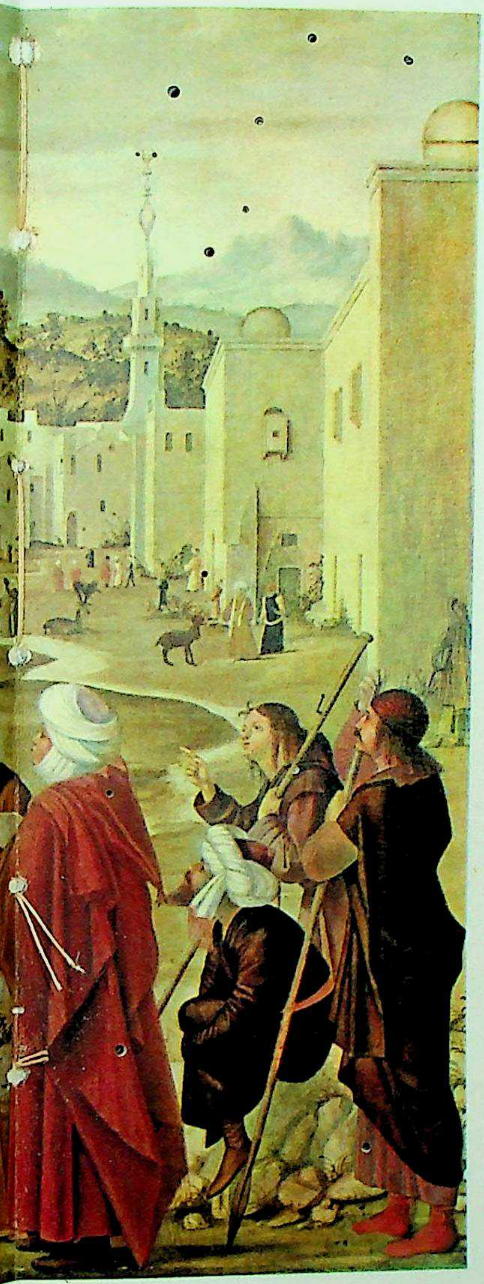
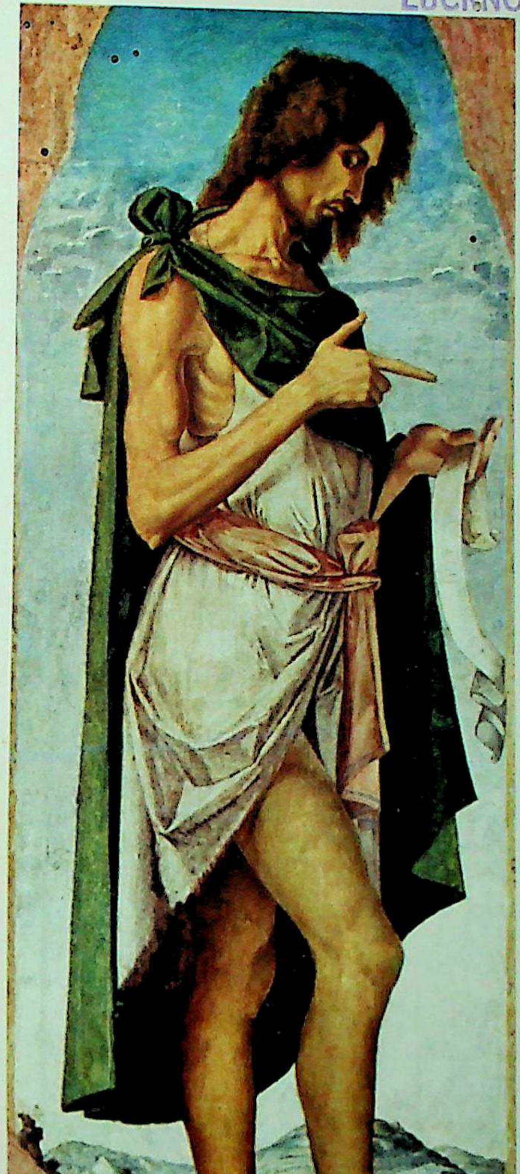
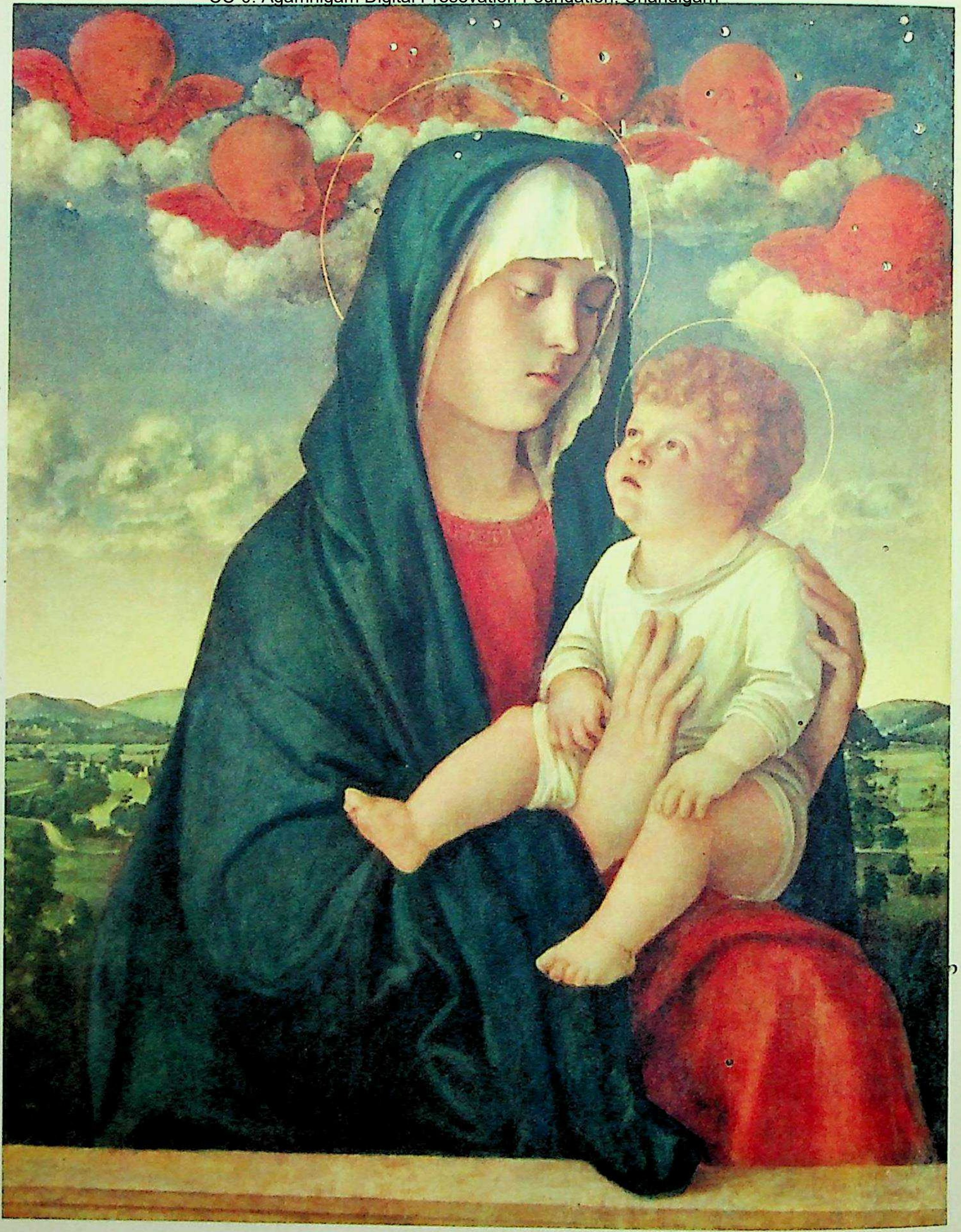




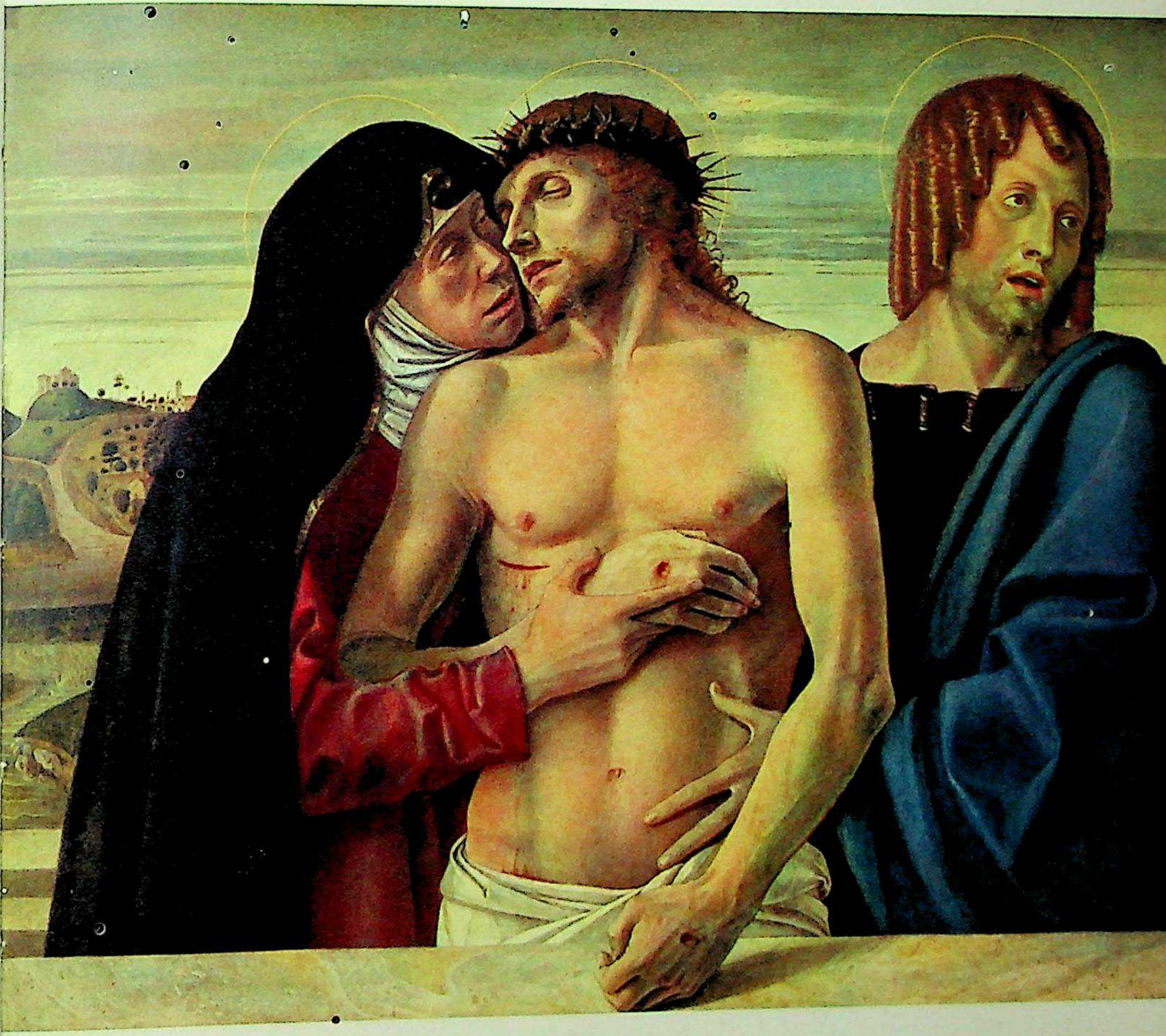
ALVISE VIVARINI
St. John the Baptist
Accademia, Venice



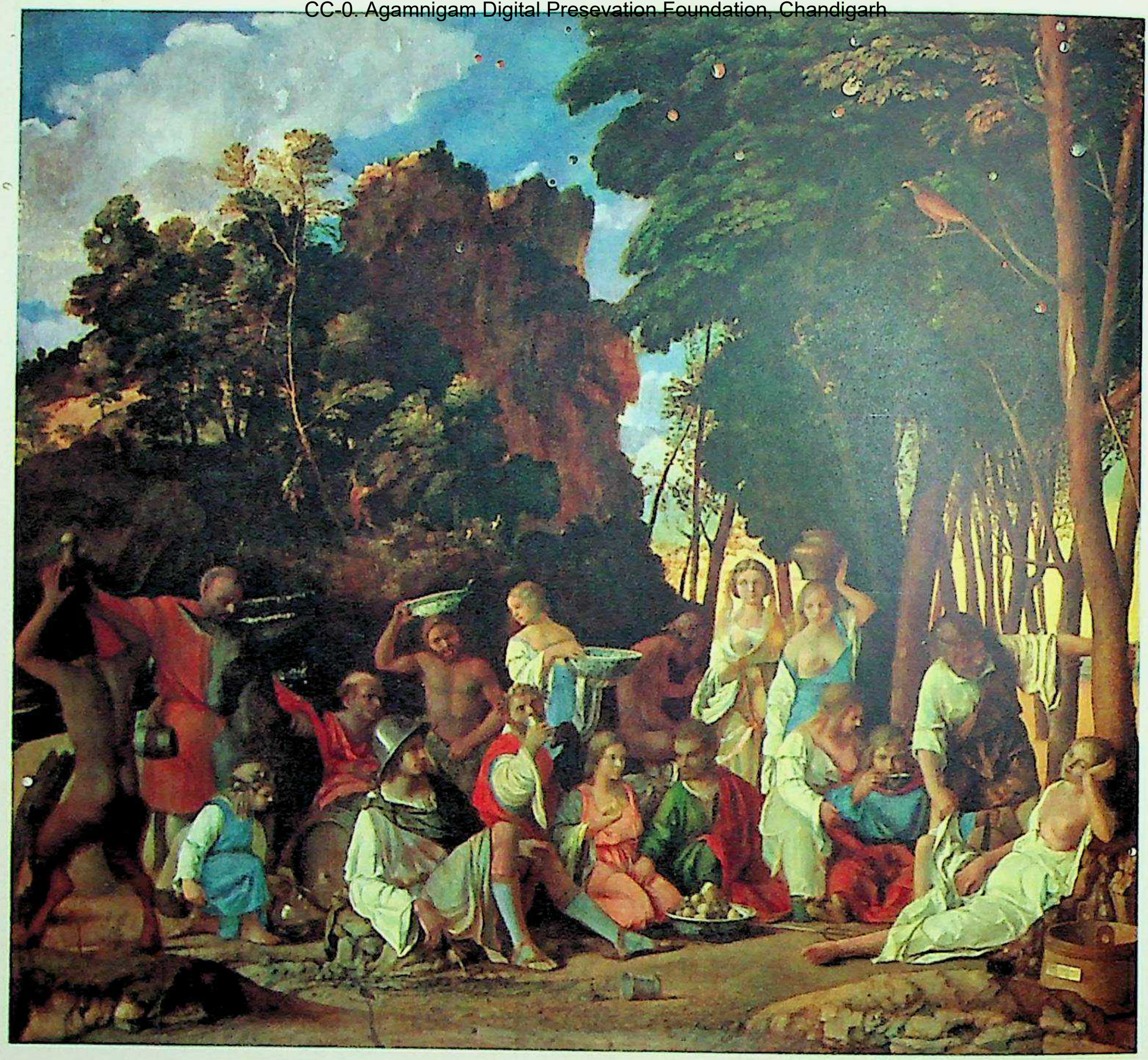
GIOVANNI BELLINI

Virgin and Child with Angels c. 1480

Accademia, Venice



GIOVANNI BELLINI
Pietà c. 1466
Brera, Milan



GIOVANNI BELLINI
The Feast of the Gods c. 1514
National Gallery of Art, Washington

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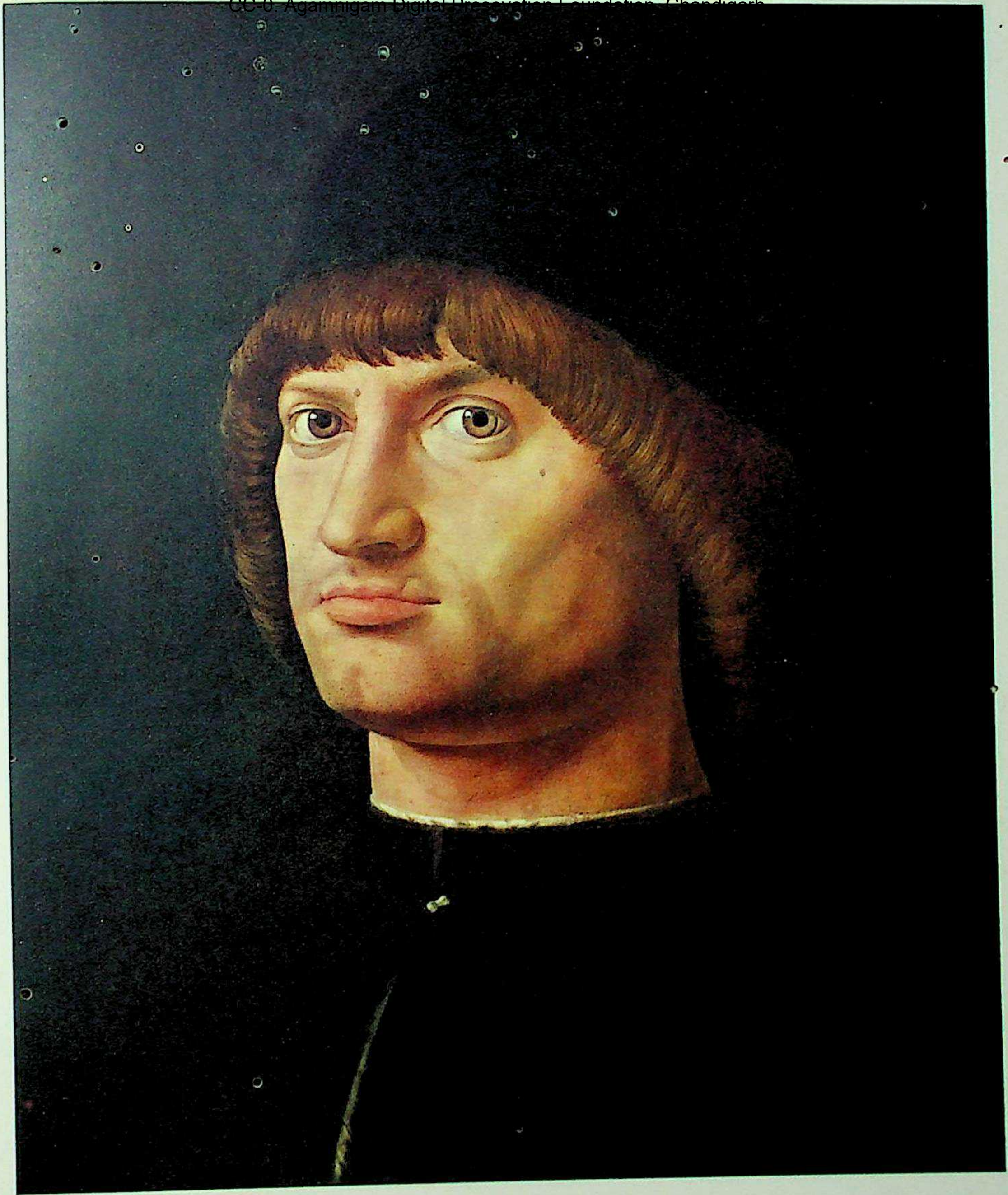
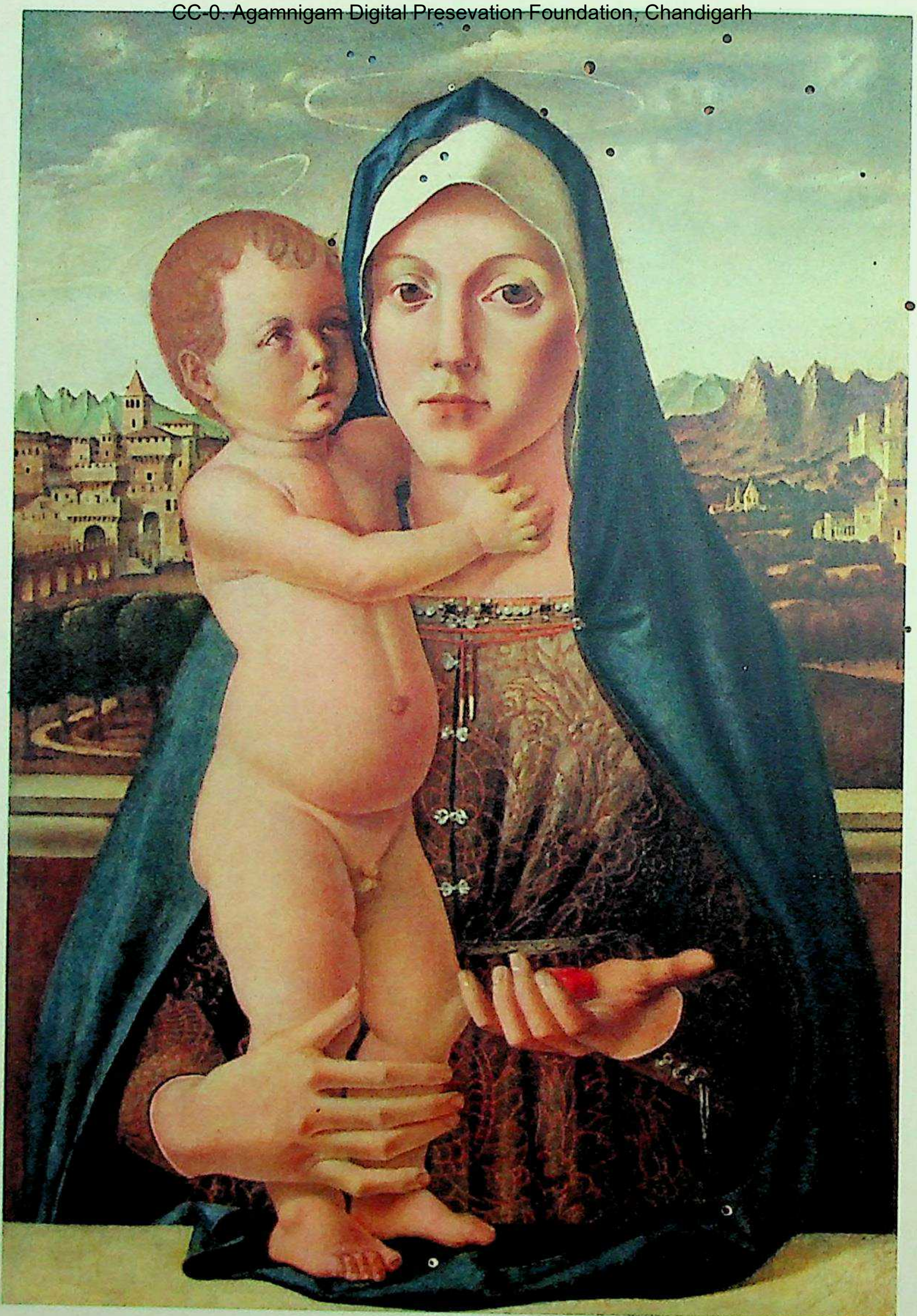
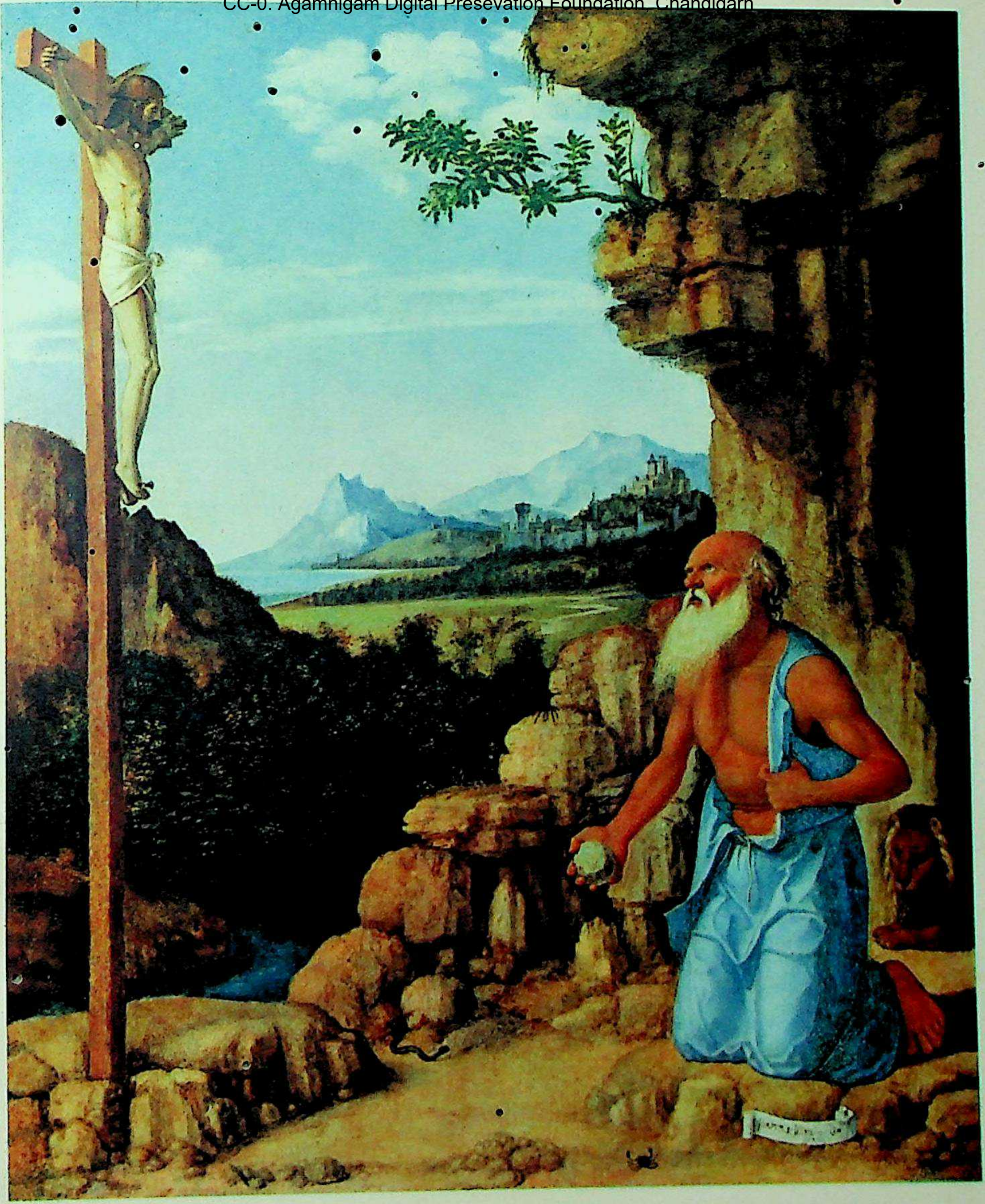


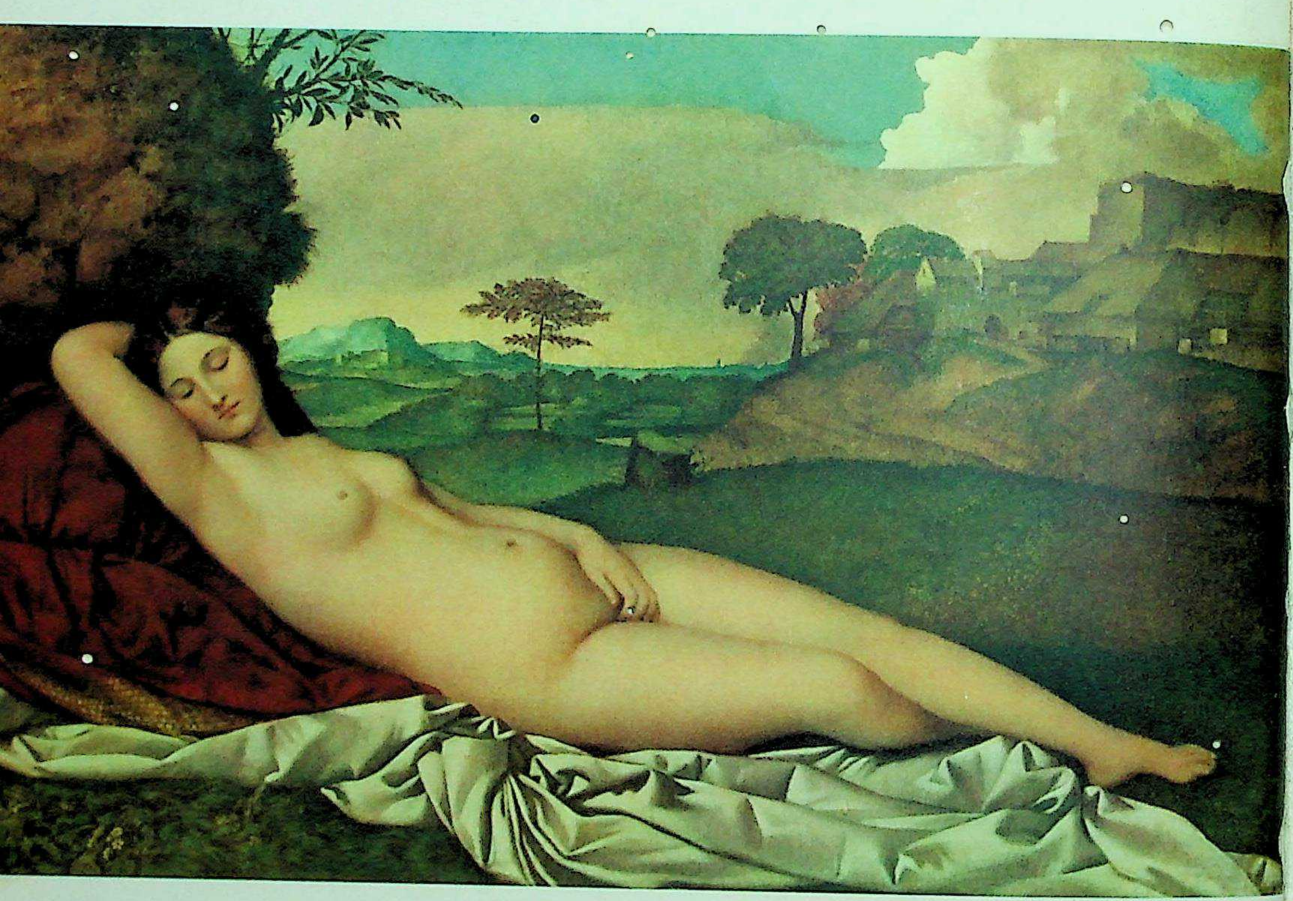
ANTONELLO DA MESSINA
THE CONDOTTIERE 1475
Louvre, Paris



BARTOLOMMEO MONTAGNA
VIRGIN AND STANDING CHILD
Museo Civico, Belluno



GIOVANNI BATTISTA CIMA DA CONEGLIANO
St. Jerome in Penitence
National Gallery of Art, Washington



GIORGIONE
Sleeping Venus c. 1508
Gemäldegalerie, Dresden

State Museum,
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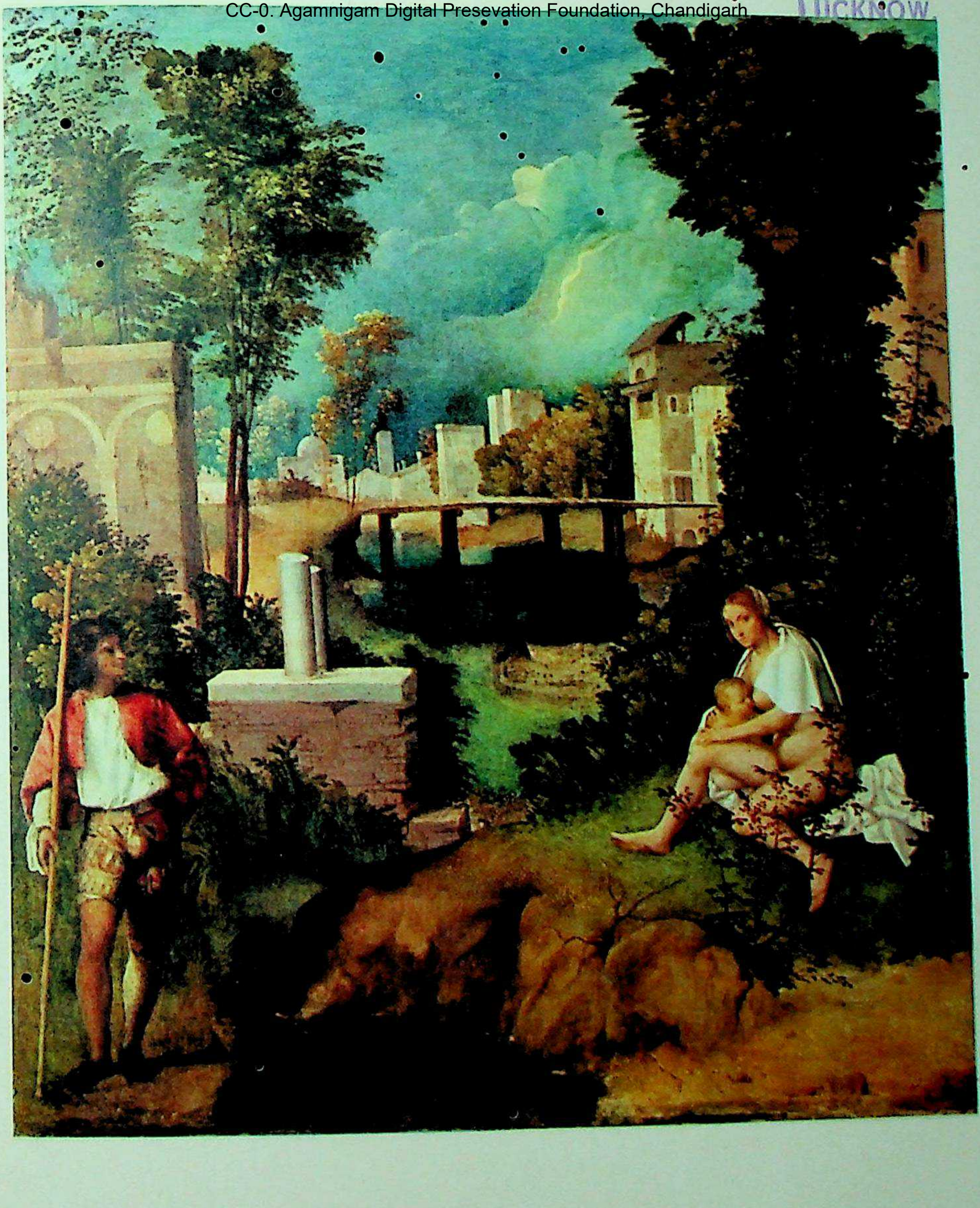
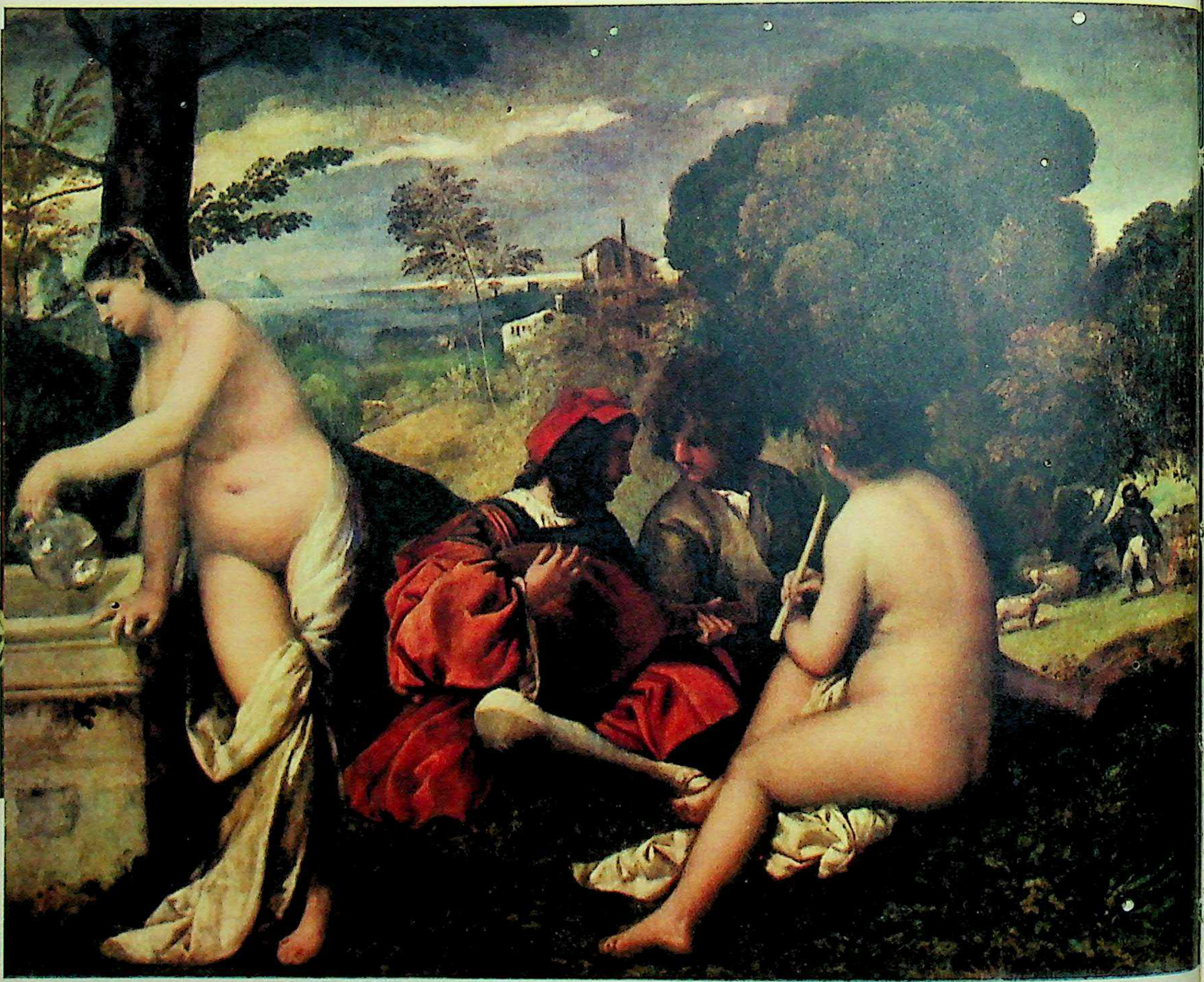
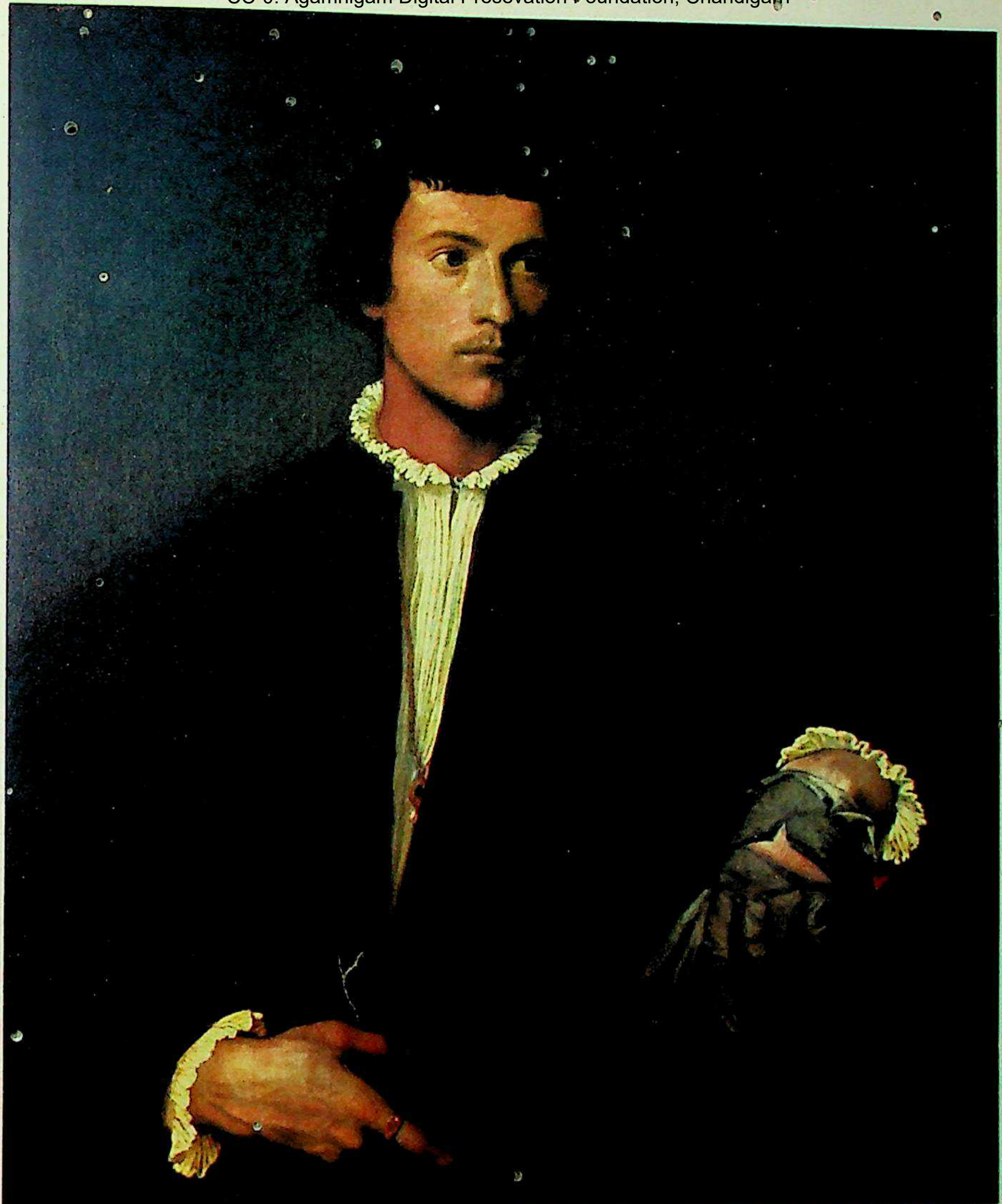


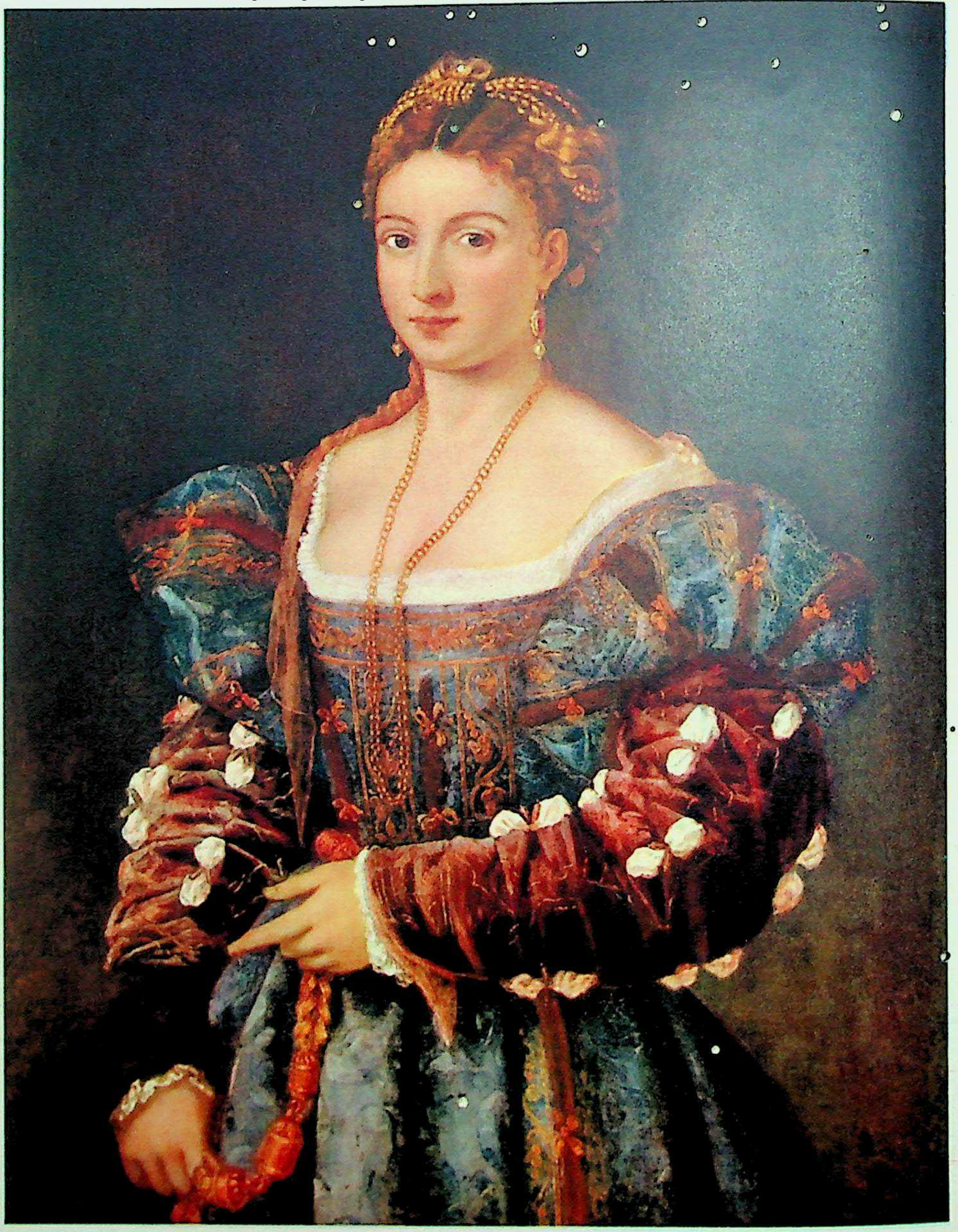
GIORGIONE
ADRASTUS AND HYPSIPYLE (LA TEMPESTA) c. 1505–7
Accademia, Venice



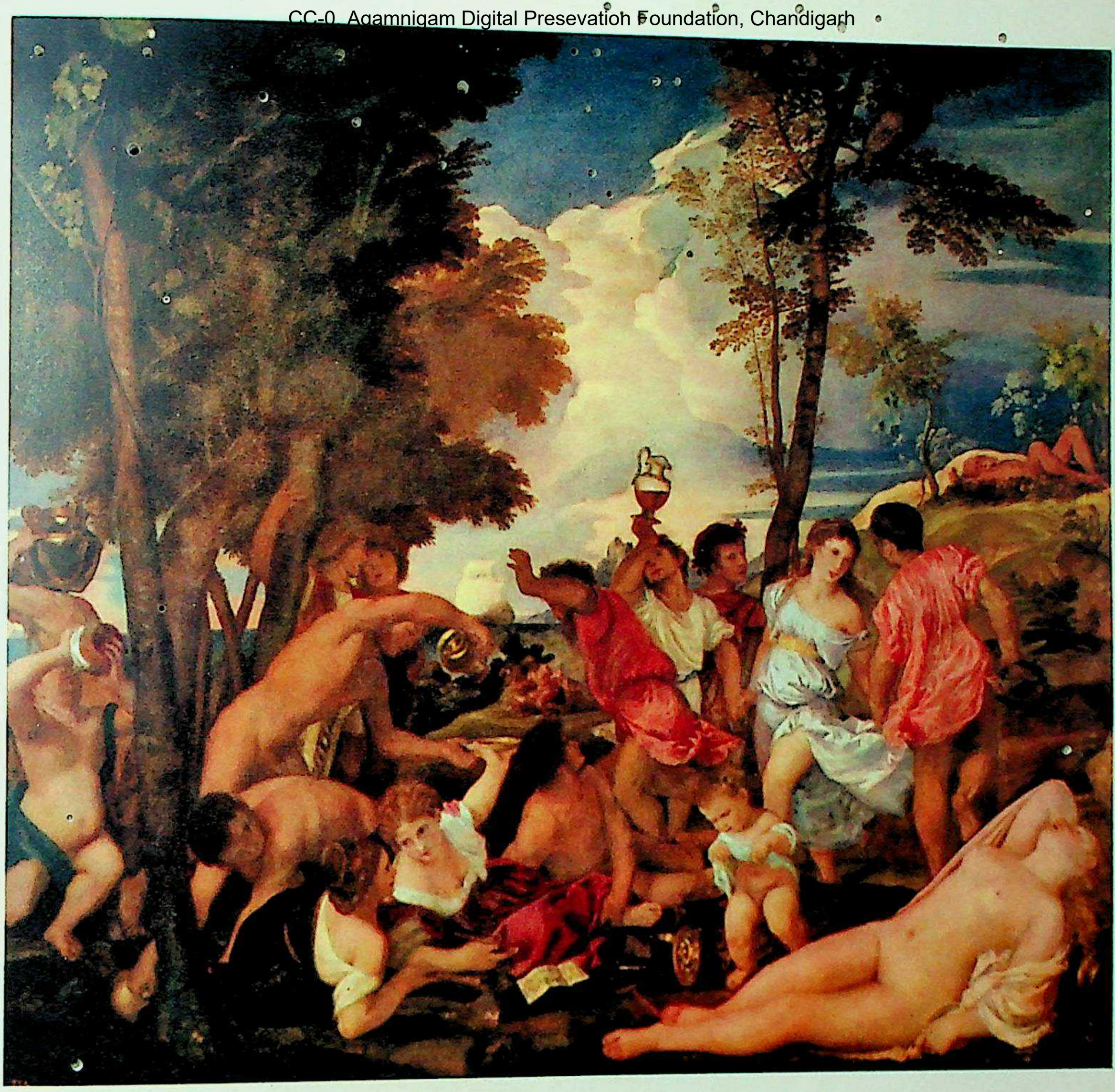
GIORGIONE
LE CONCERT CHAMPÊTRE c. 1508–10
Louvre, Paris



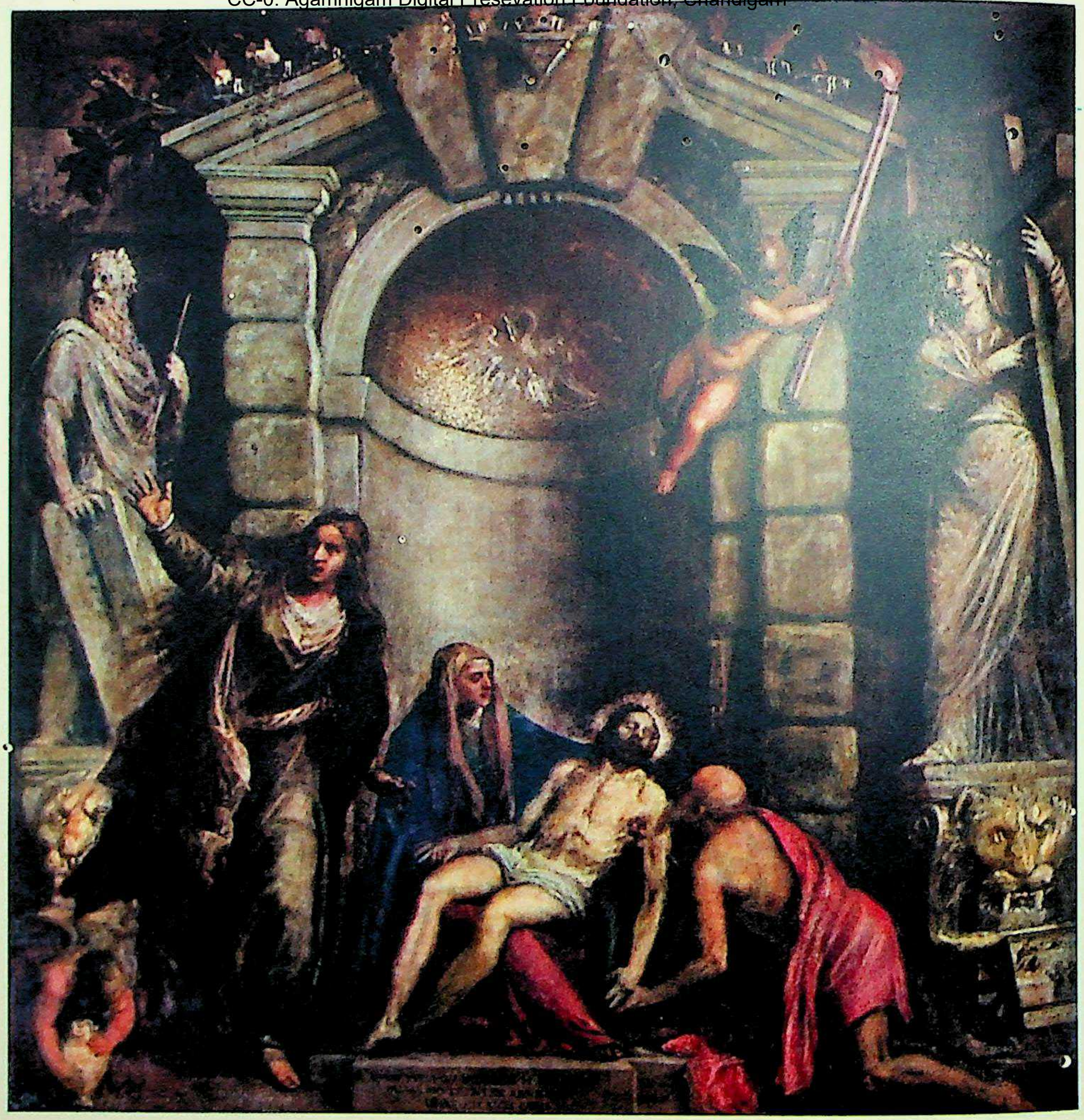
TITIAN
The Man with the Gloves 1510–20
Louvre, Paris



TITIAN
La Bella c. 1536
Palazzo Pitti, Florence



TITIAN
BACCHANAL 1518
Prado, Madrid



TITIAN
Pietà c. 1576
Accademia, Venice

State Museum,
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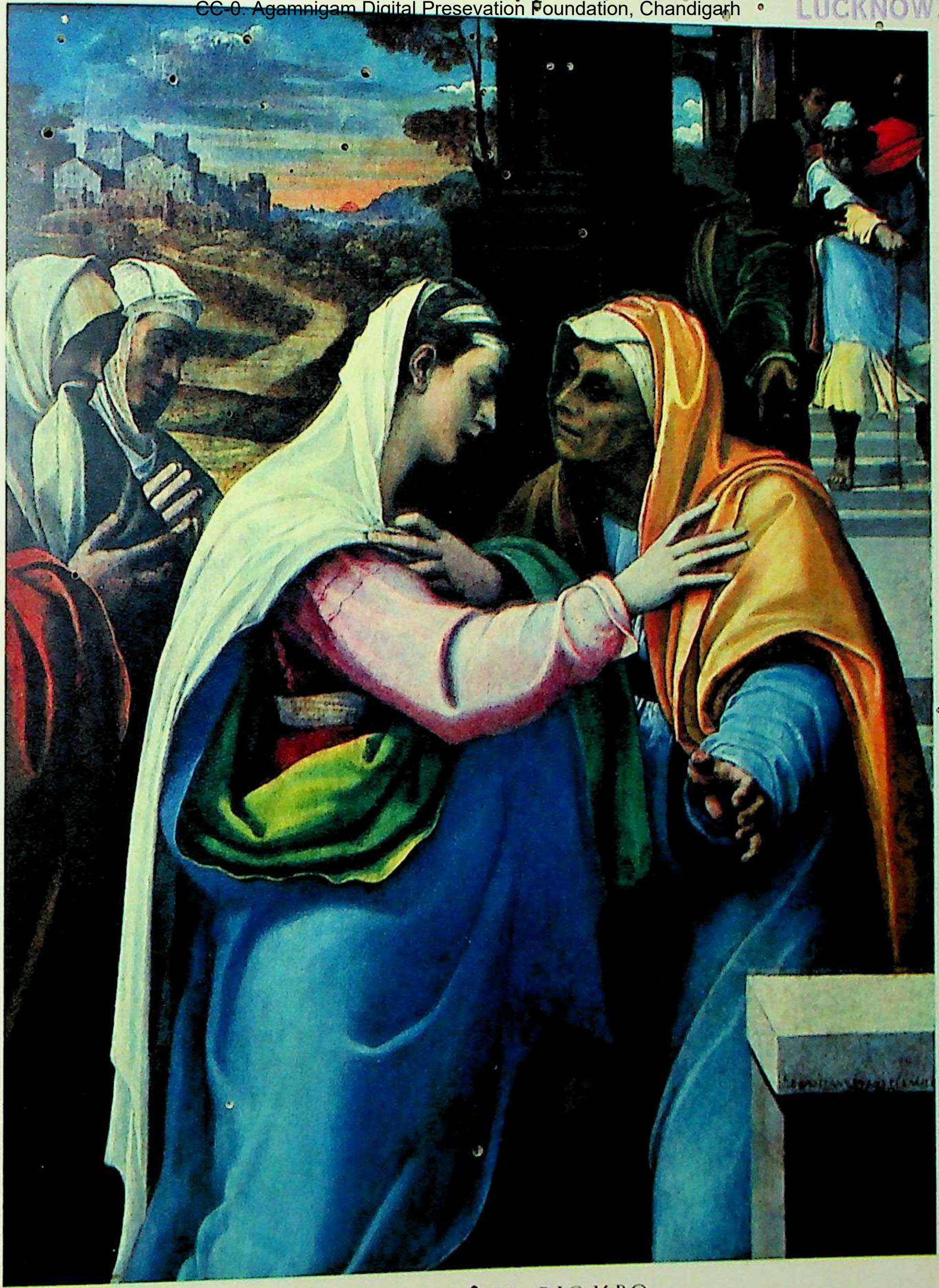
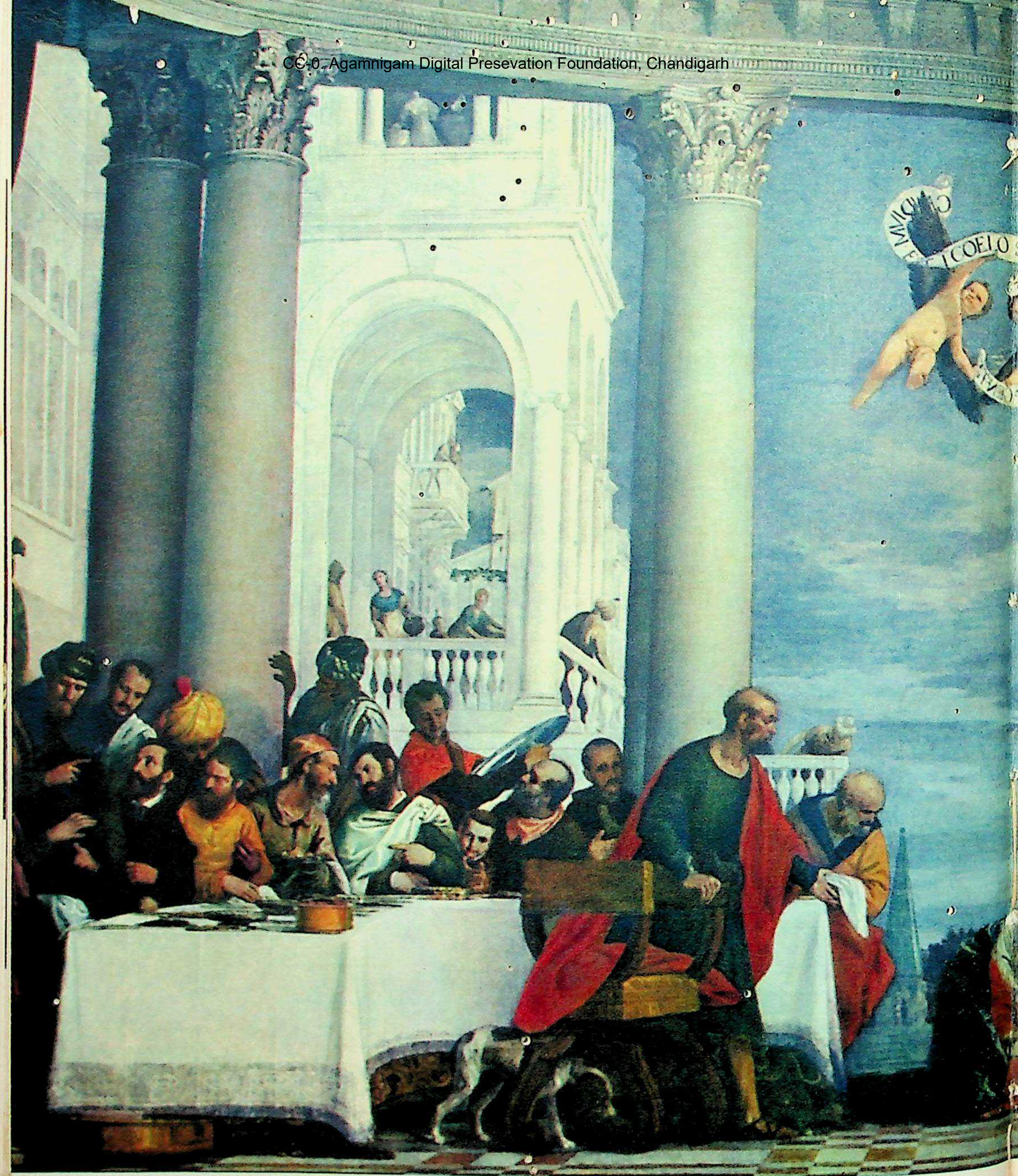
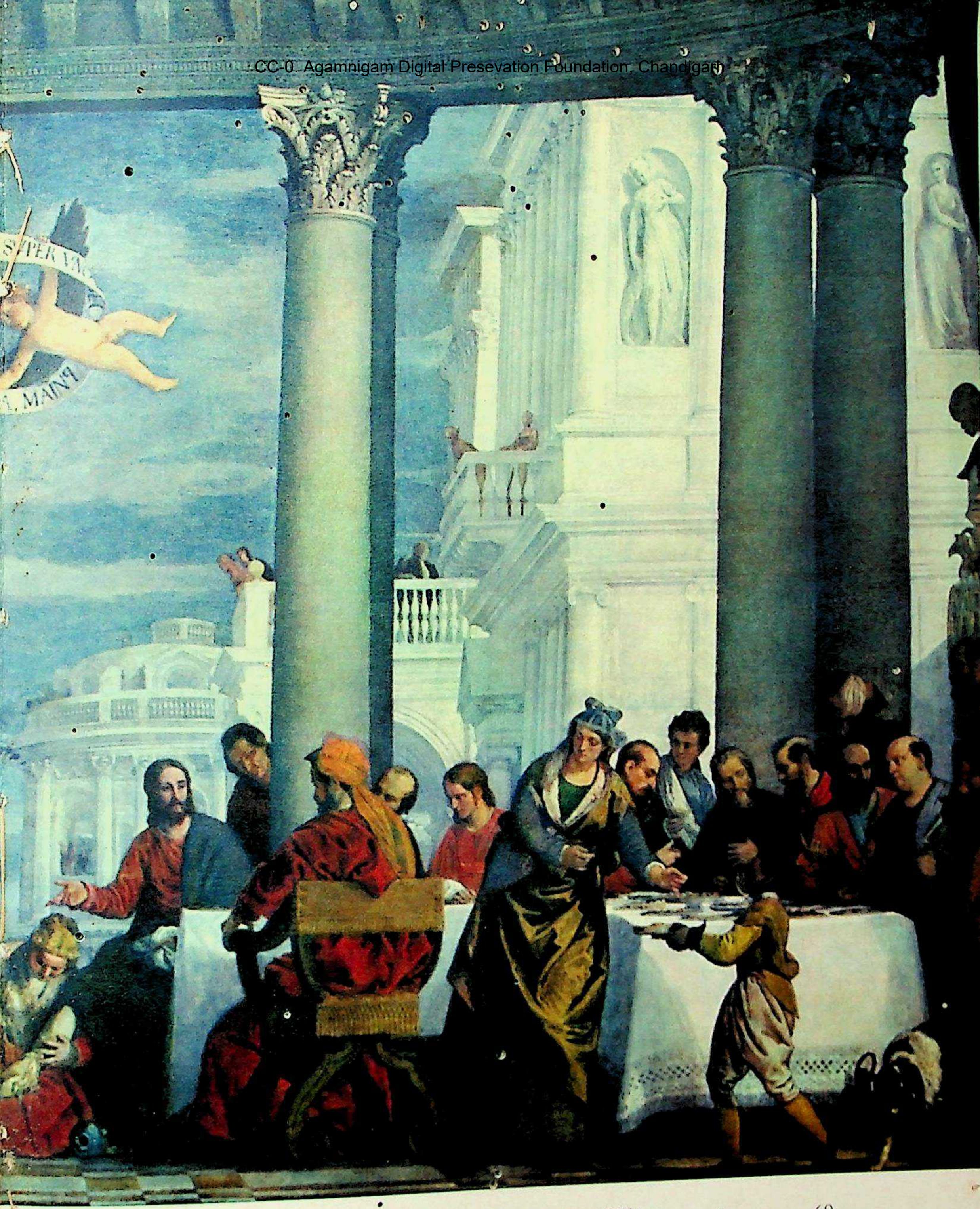


SEBASTIANO DEL PIOMBO
Visitation 1521
Louvre, Paris



PAOLO VERONESE



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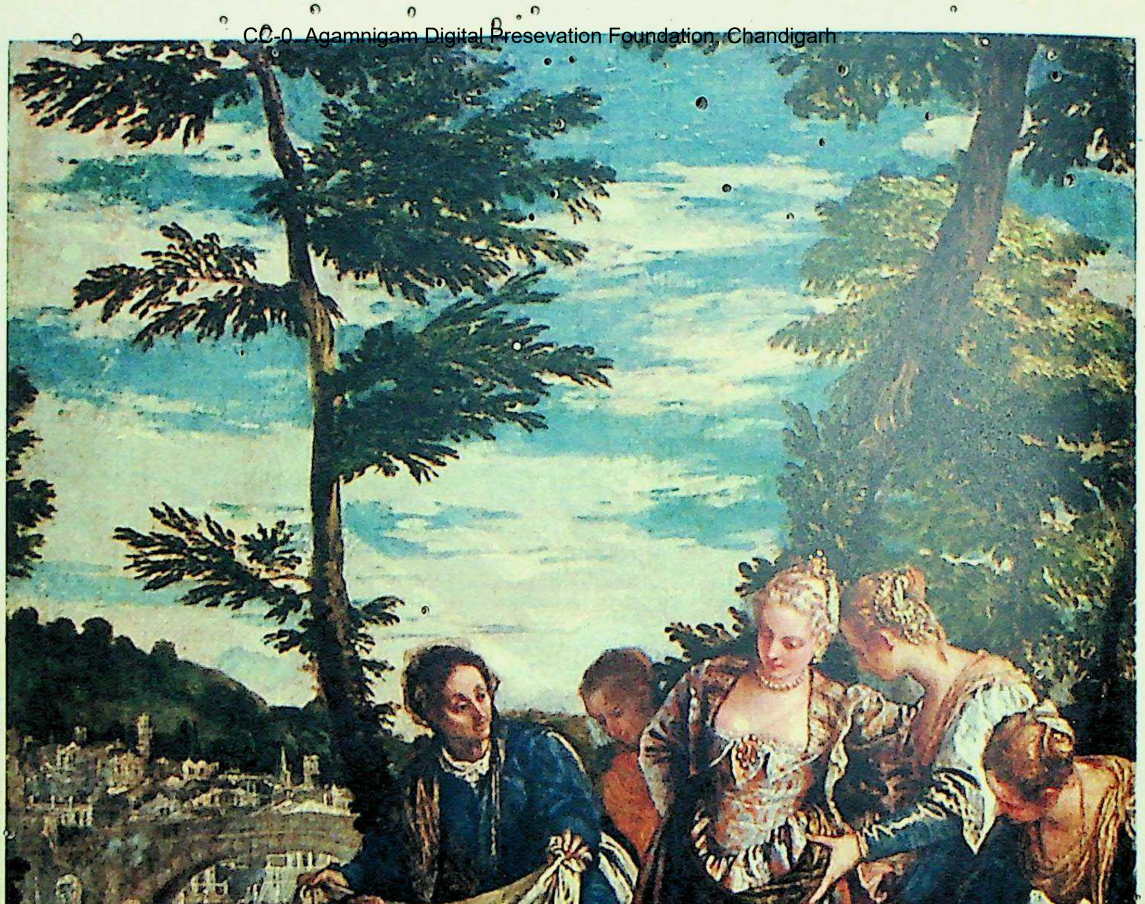
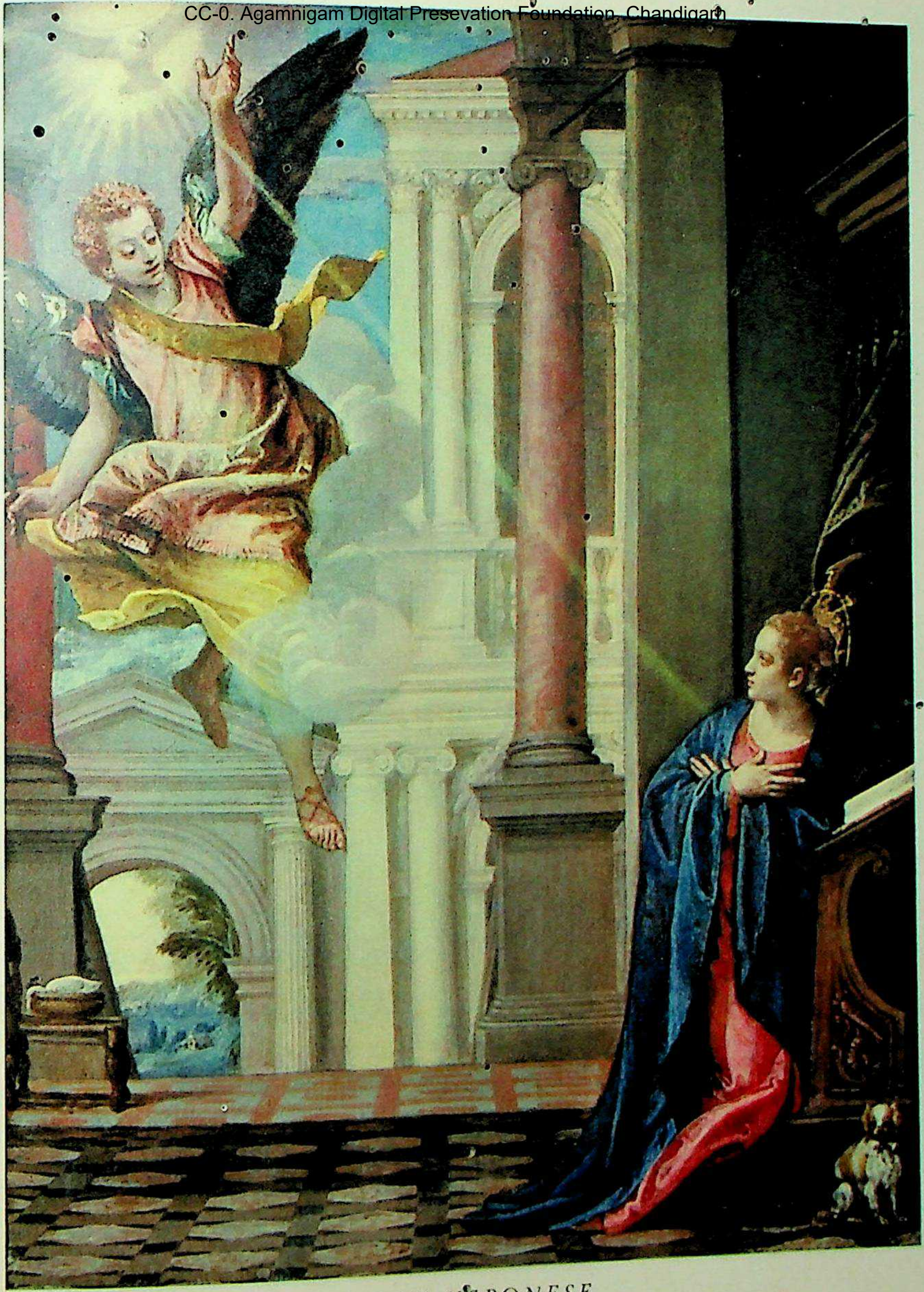
THE FEAST IN THE HOUSE OF SIMON THE PHARISEE c. 1573
Louvre, Paris



PAOLO VERONESE
The Finding of Moses c. 1560–70
Prado, Madrid



PAOLO VERONESE

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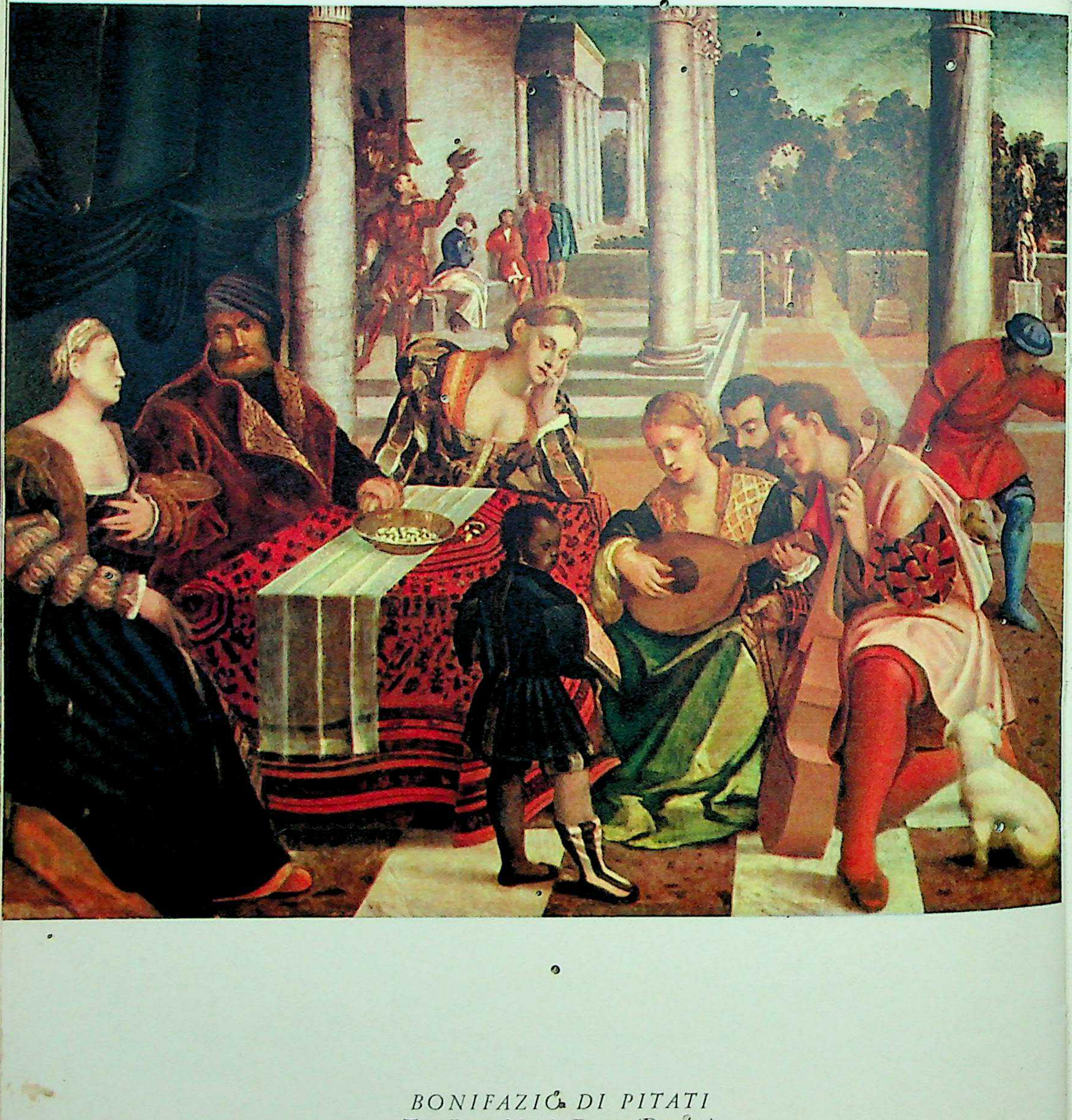
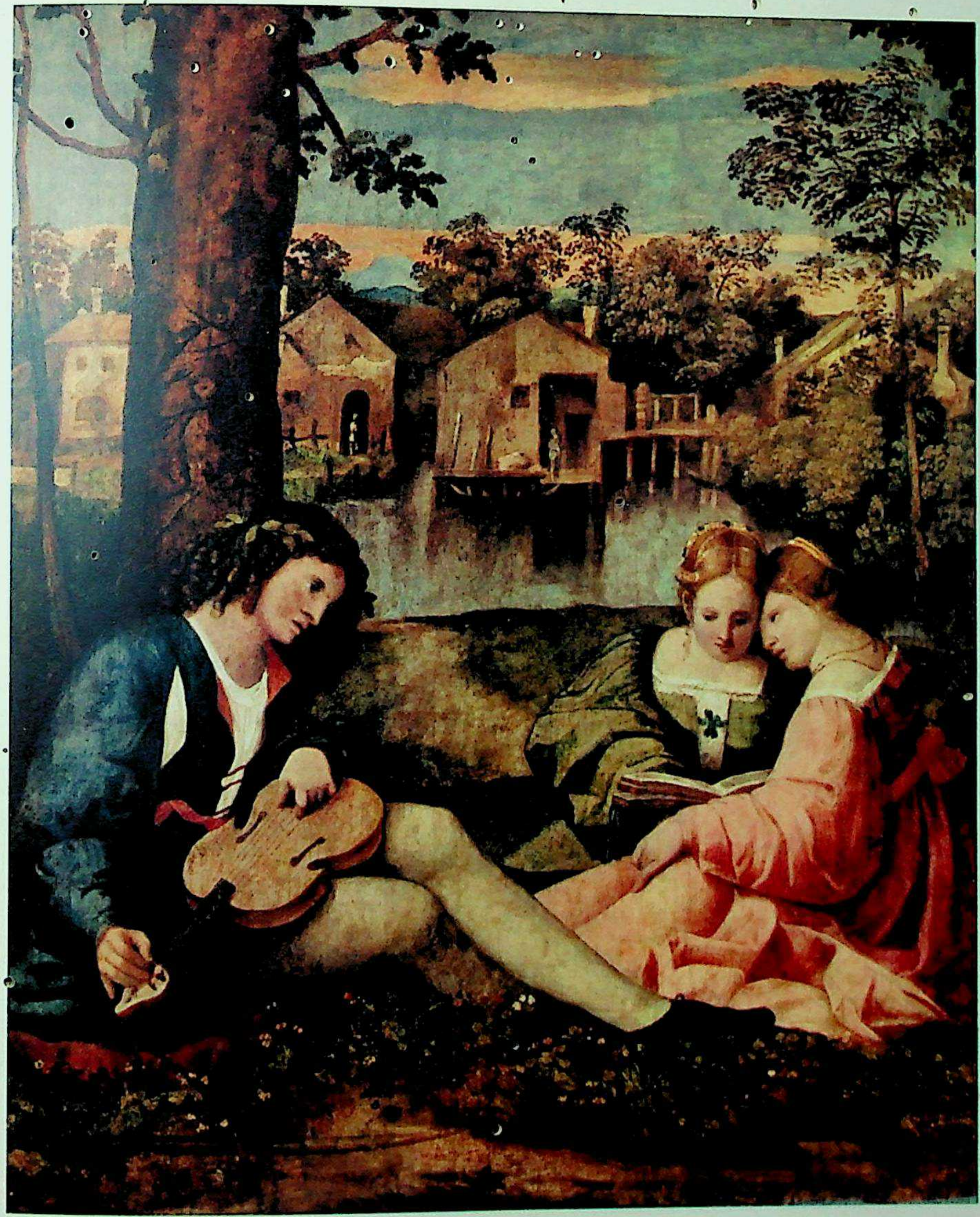
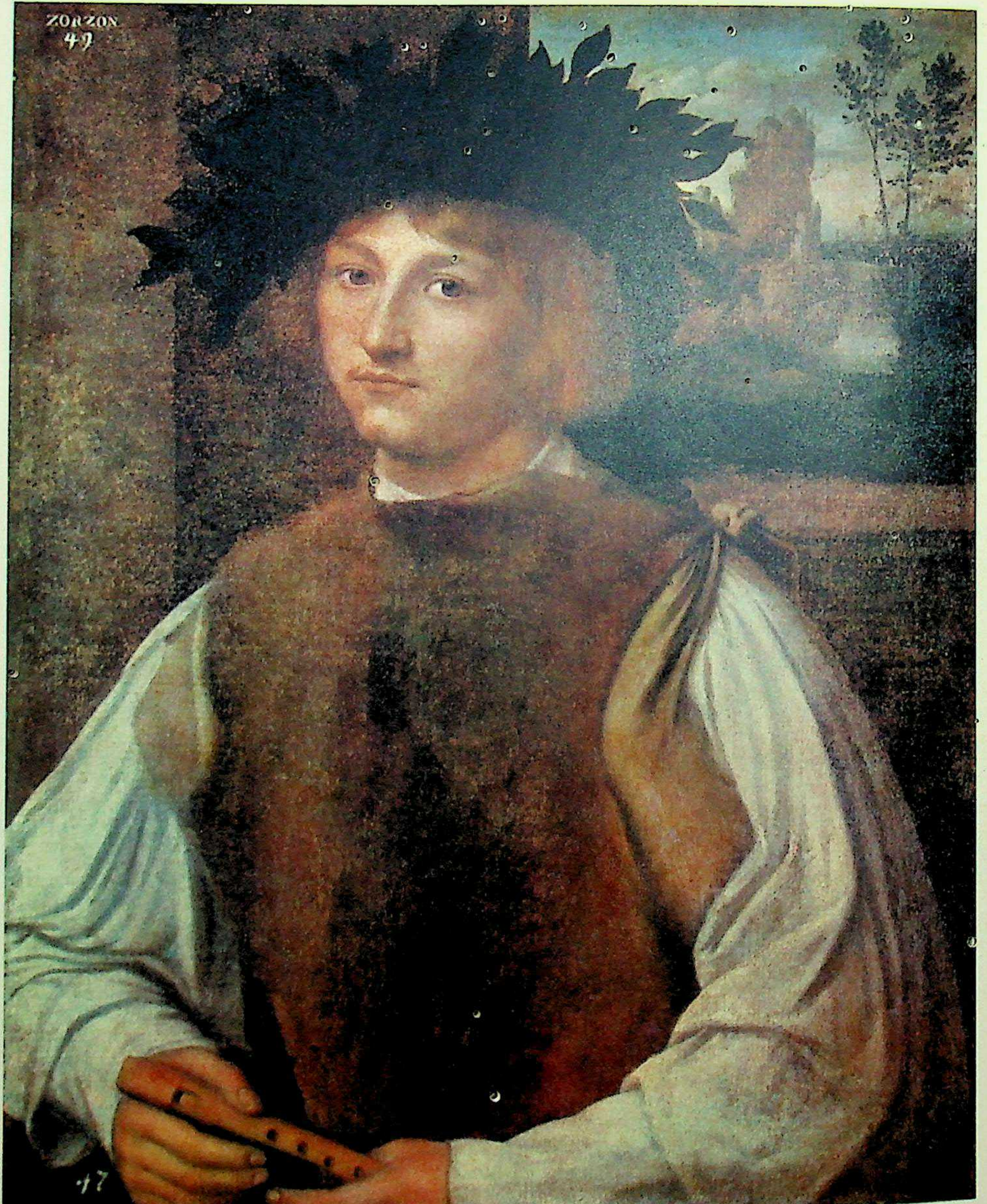


BONIFAZIO DI PITATI
THE RICH MAN'S FEAST (DETAIL)
Accademia, Venice



GIOVANNI CARIANI
BEFORE THE CONCERT
Lady Colum Crichton-Stuart Collection, Rothesay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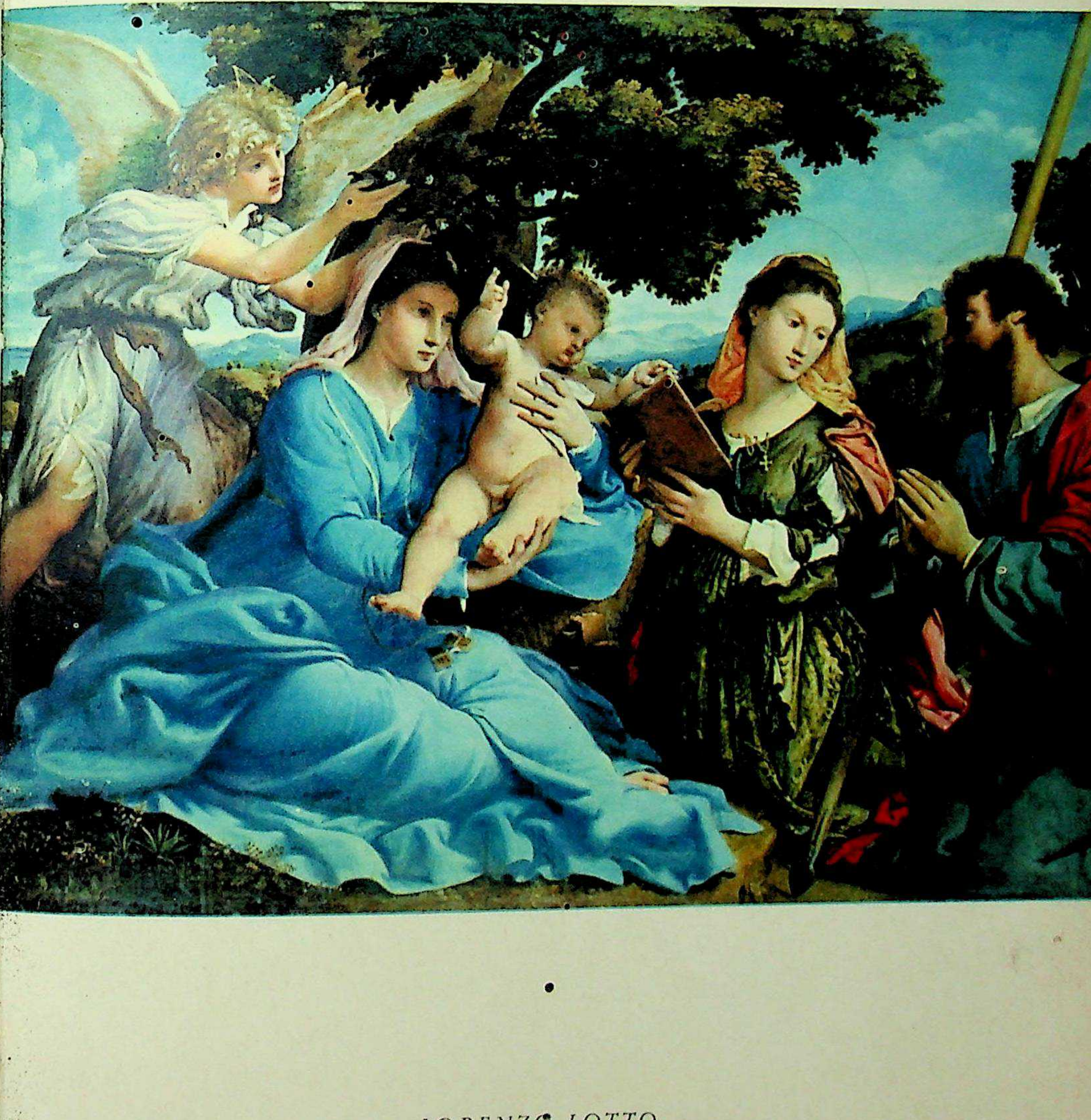
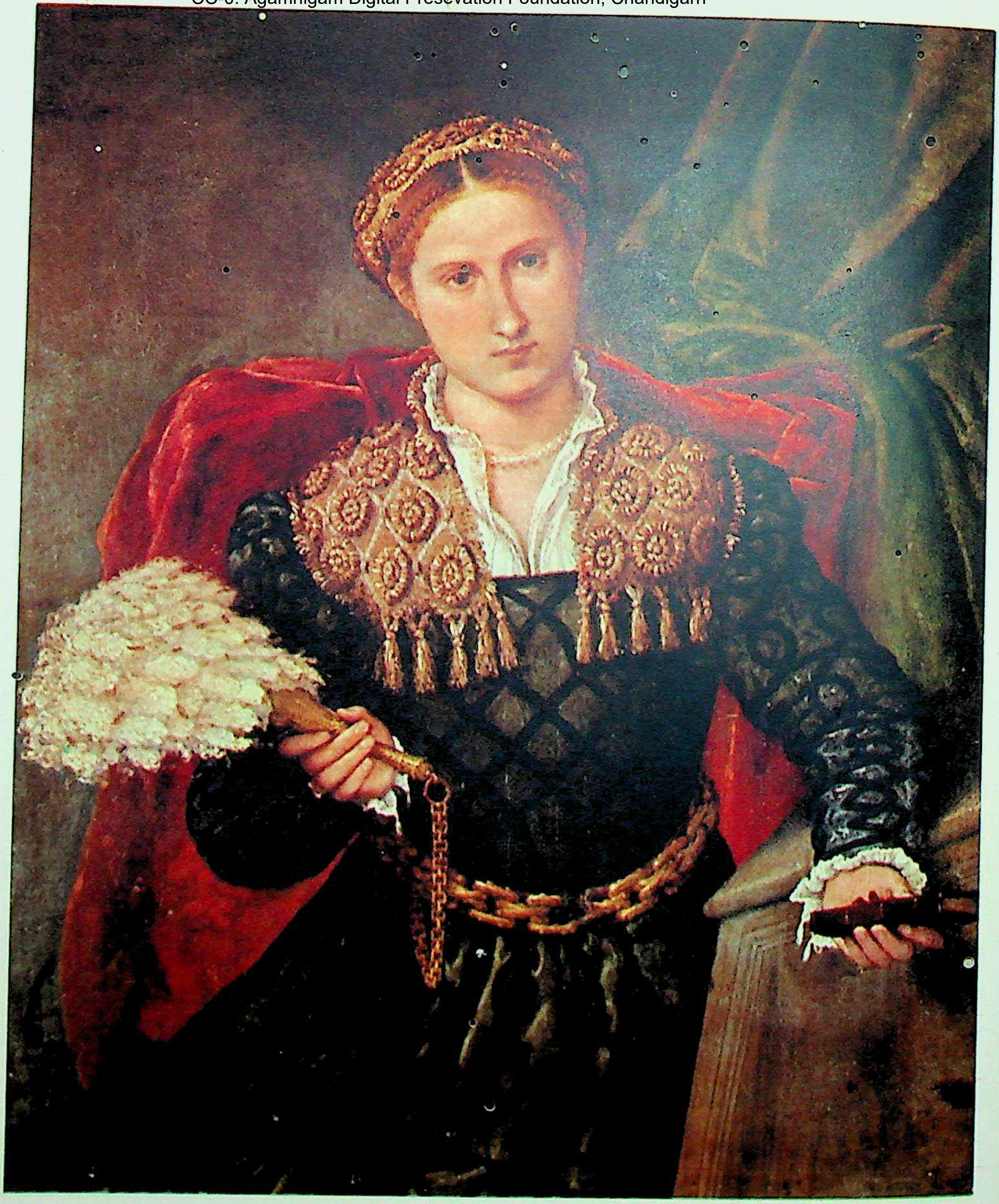
FRANCESCO TORBIDO
The Recorder Player
Museo Civico, Padua



LORENZO LOTTO
SACRA CONVERSAZIONE c. 1527
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



LORENZO LOTTO
Laura da Pola 1543
Brera, Milan

State Museum,
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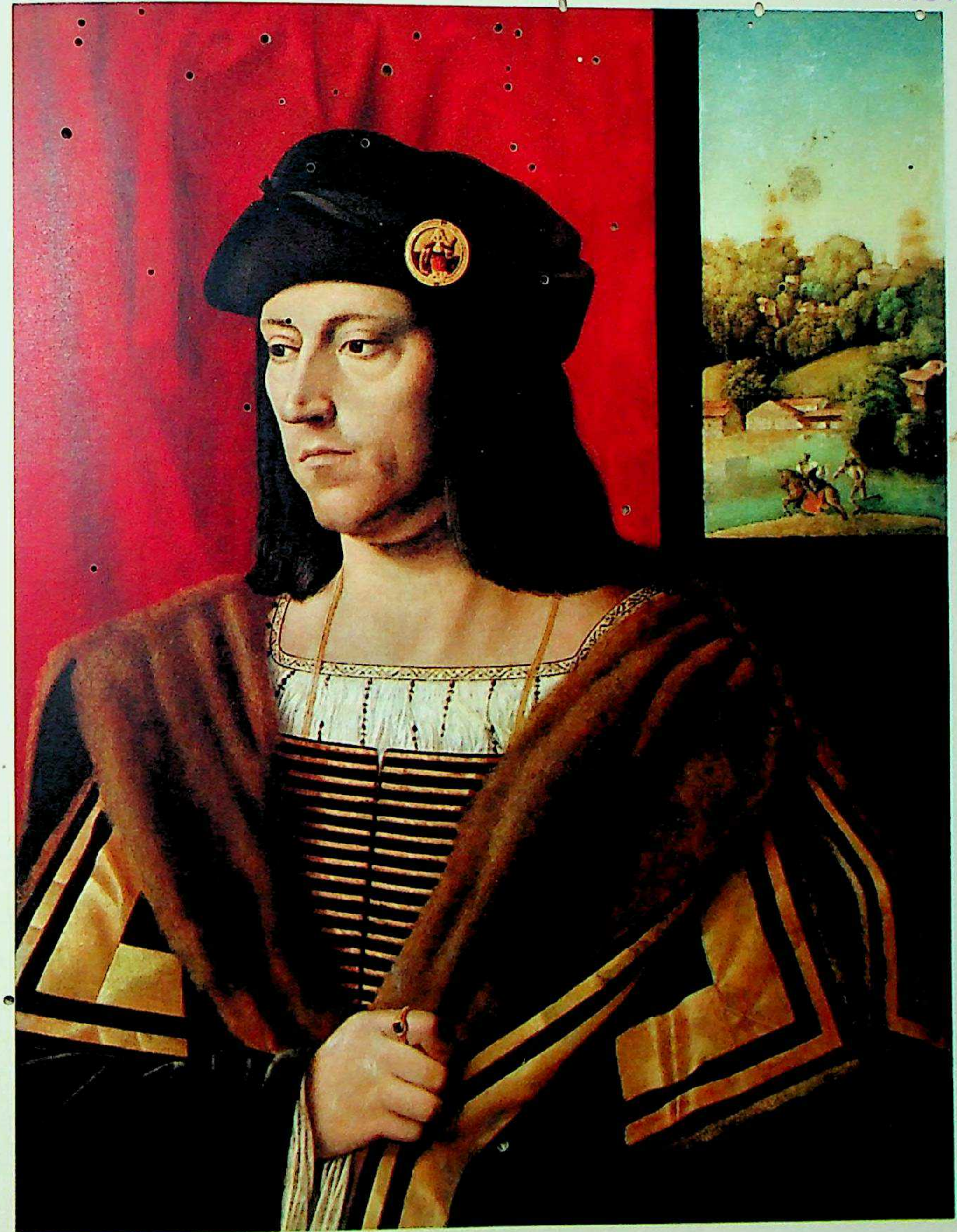
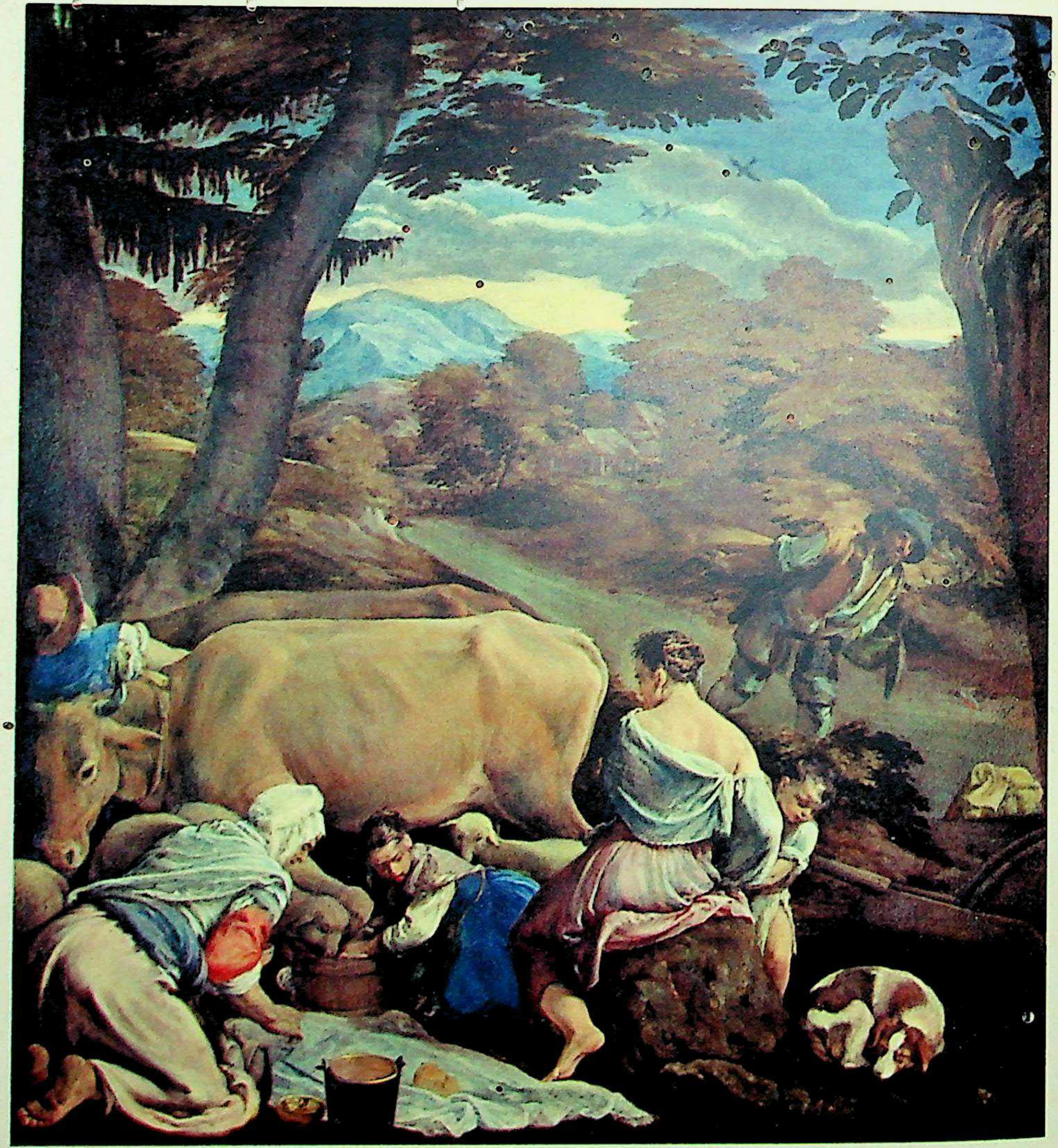
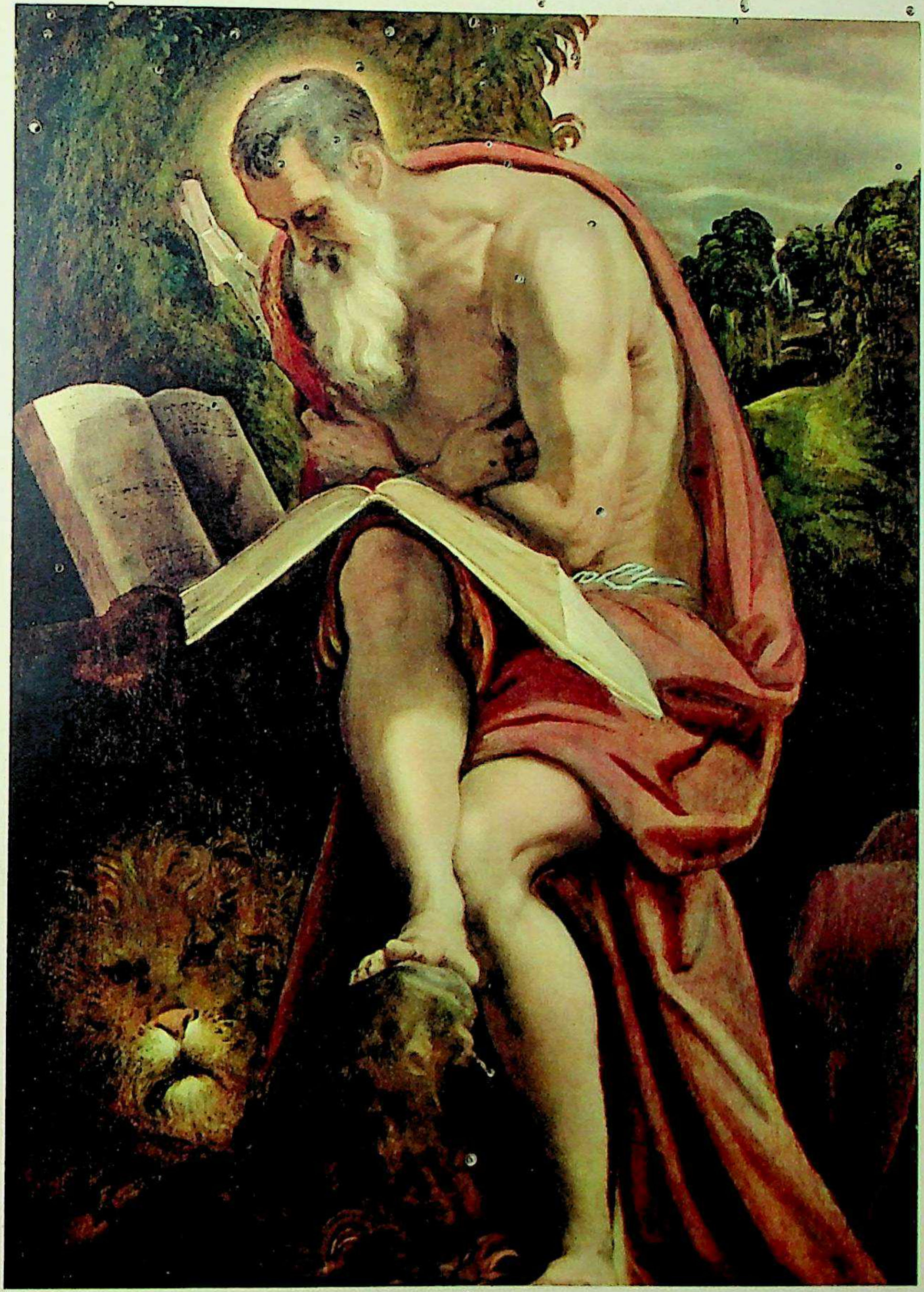


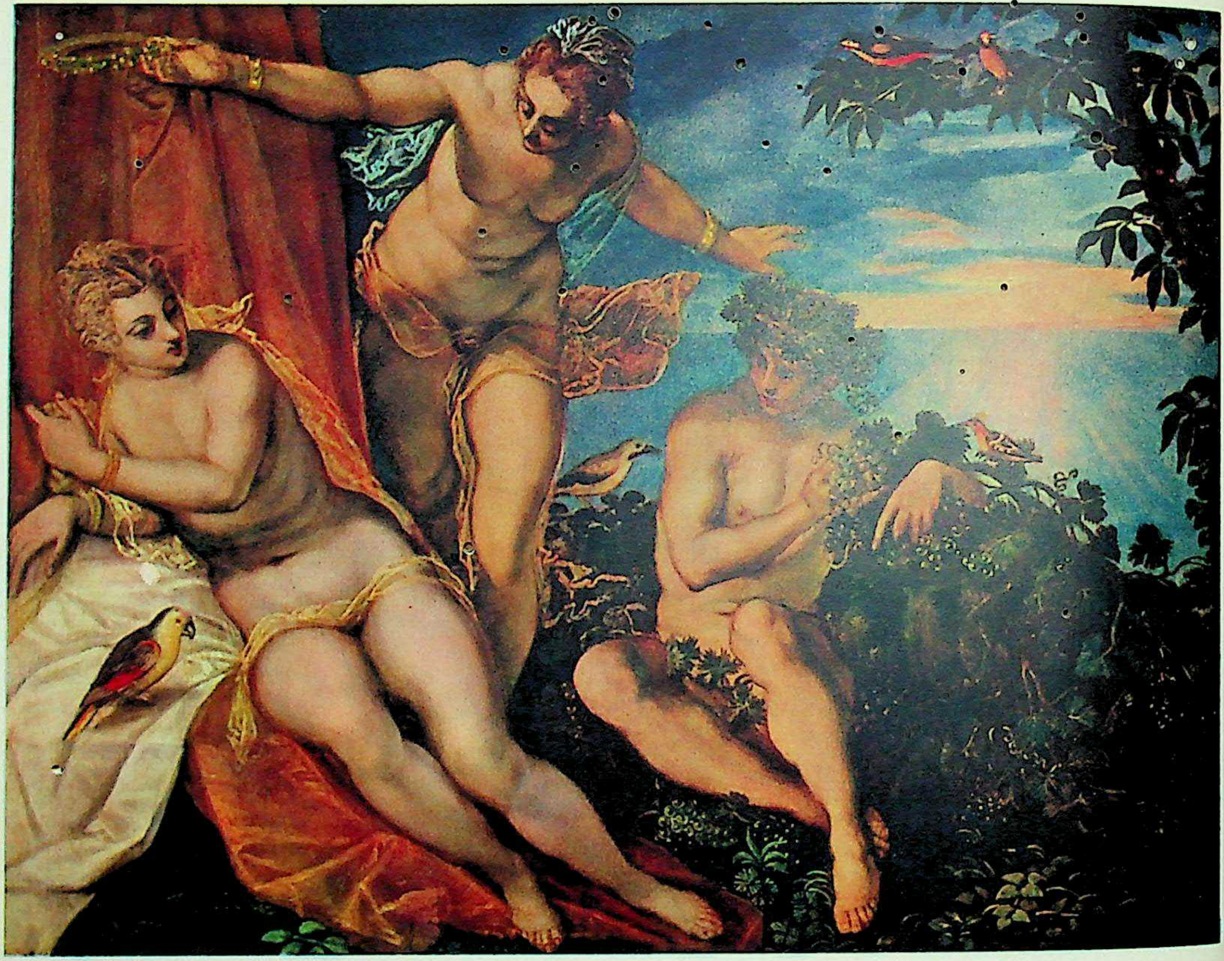
BARTOLOMMEO VENETO
Portrait of a Man
National Gallery of Art, Washington



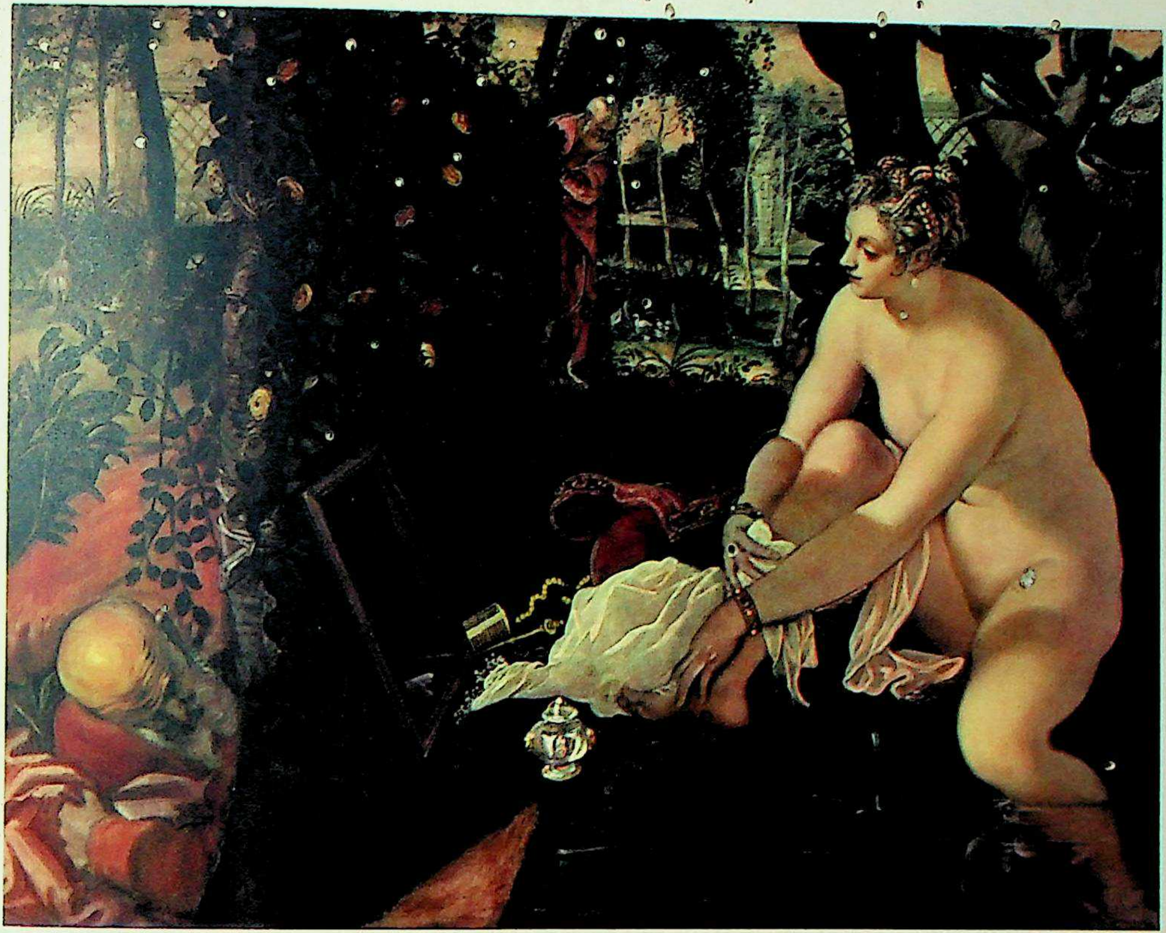
JACOPO BASSANO
PASTORAL SCENE
Thyssen Collection, Lugano



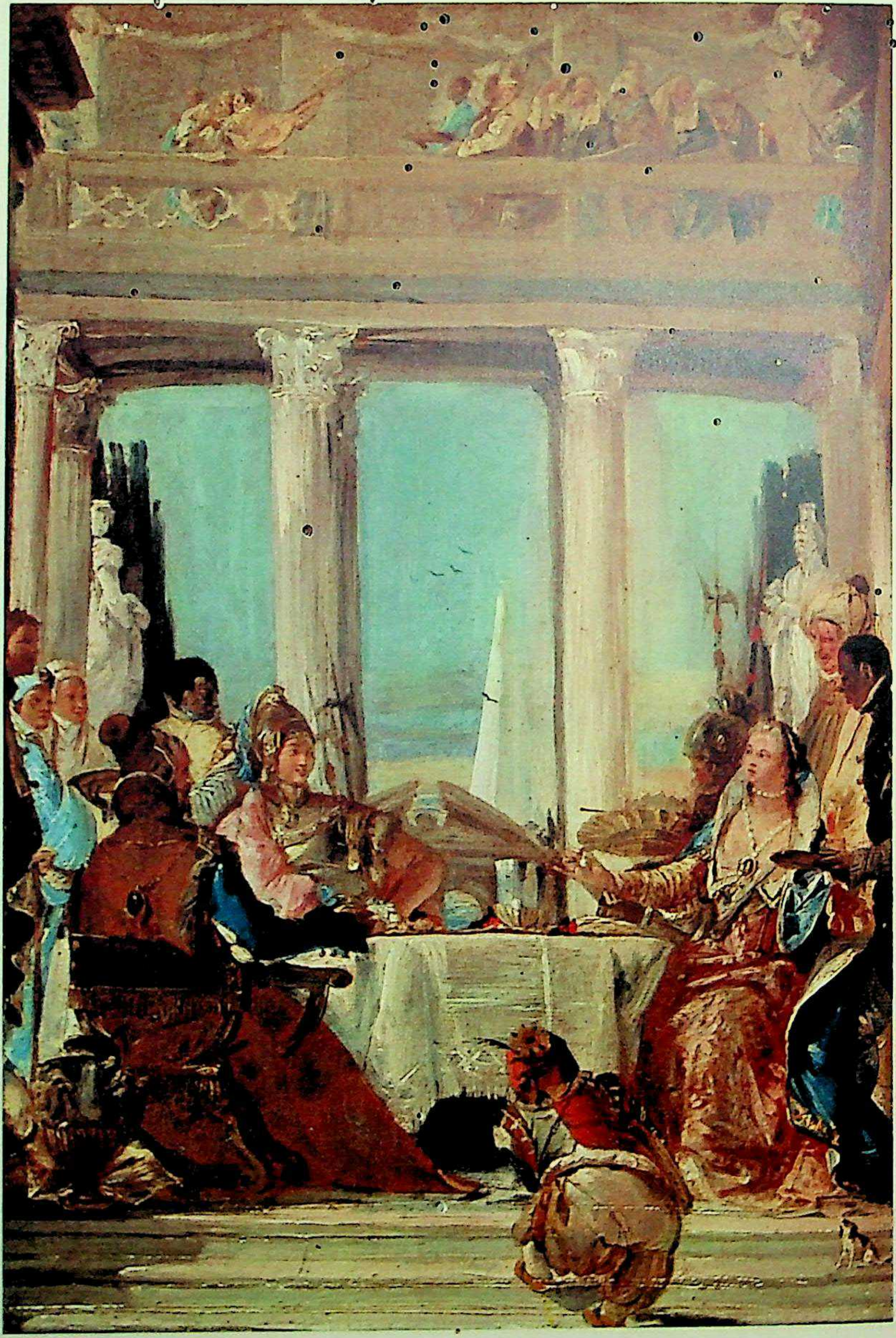
JACOPO TINTORETTO
St. Jerome c. 1555–60
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



JACOPO TINTORETTO
Bacchus and Ariadne
Museum, Strasbourg



JACOPO TINTORETTO
SUSANNA BATHING c. 1560
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



GIOVANNI BATTISTA TIEPOLO
CLEOPATRA'S BANQUET
Museum, Strasbourg

State Museum,
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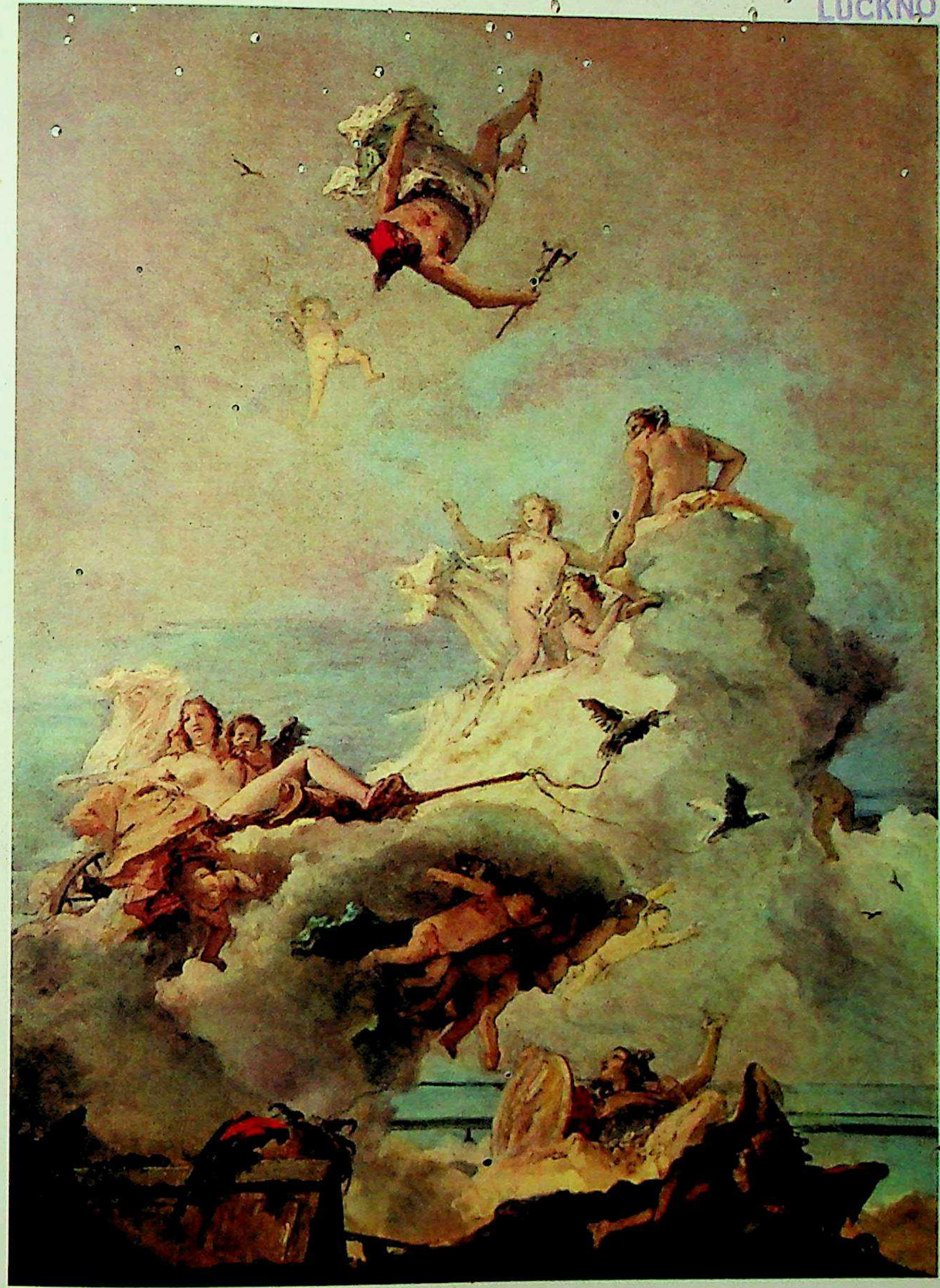
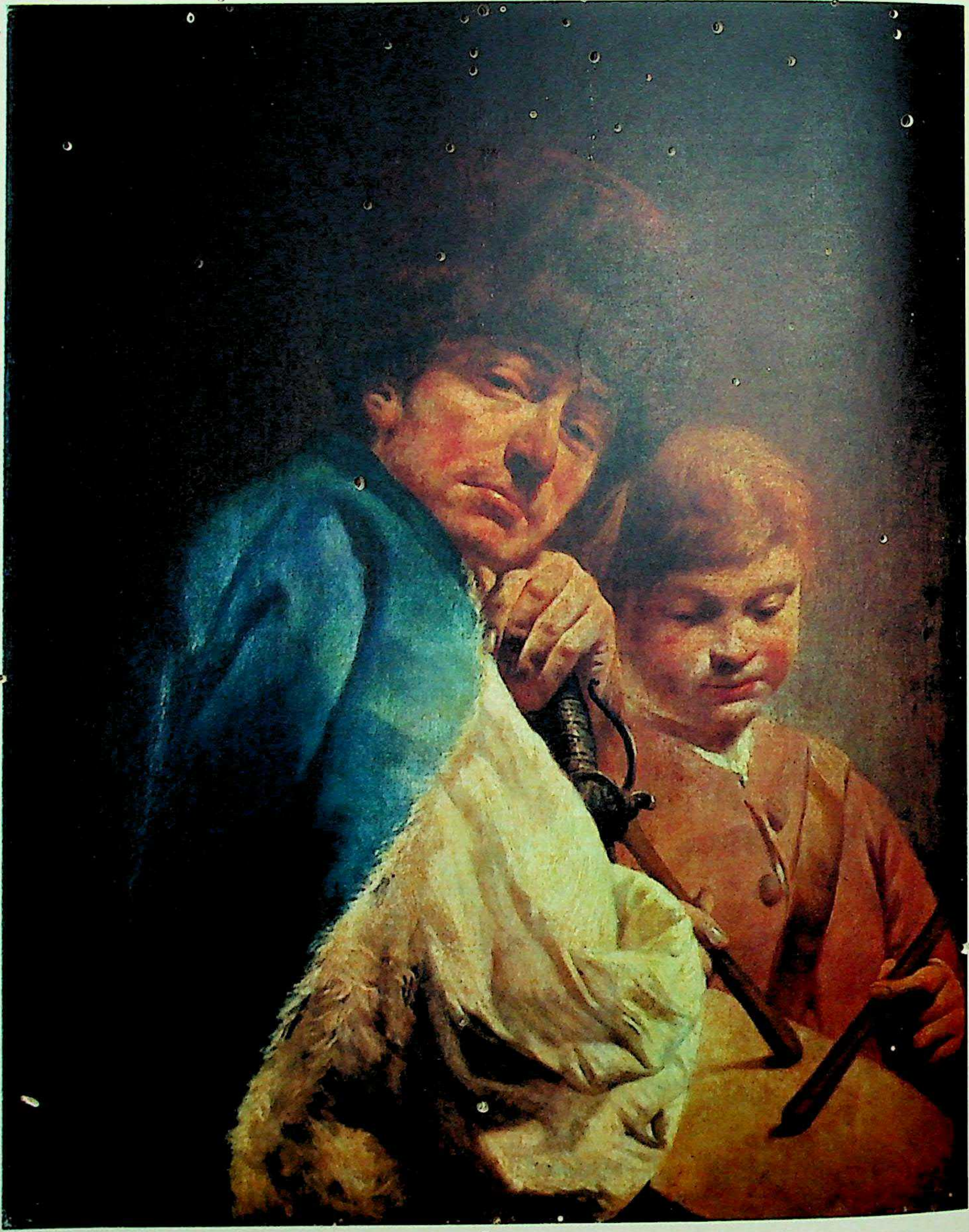


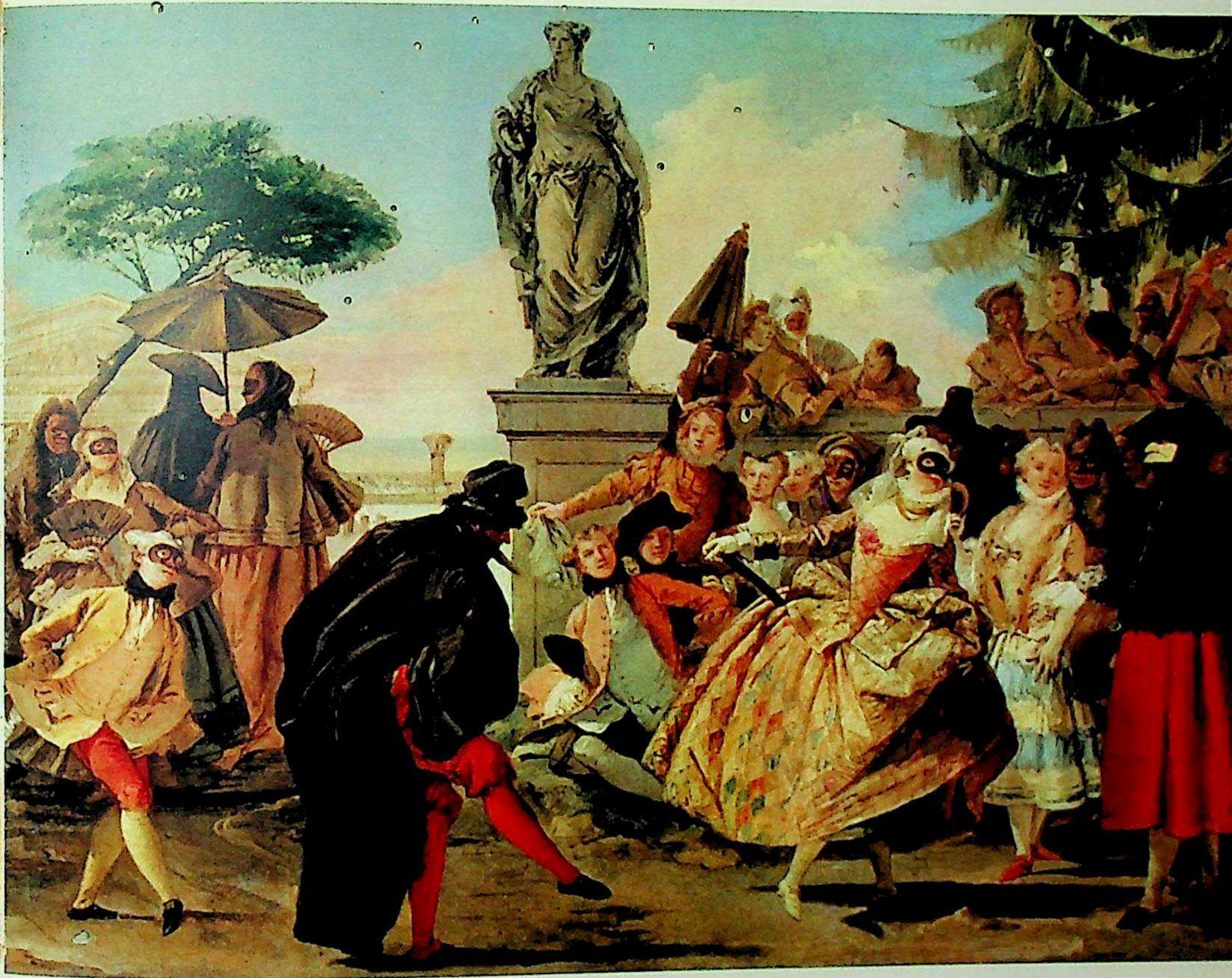
GIOVANNI BATTISTA TIEPOLO
Olympus c. 1765
Prado, Madrid



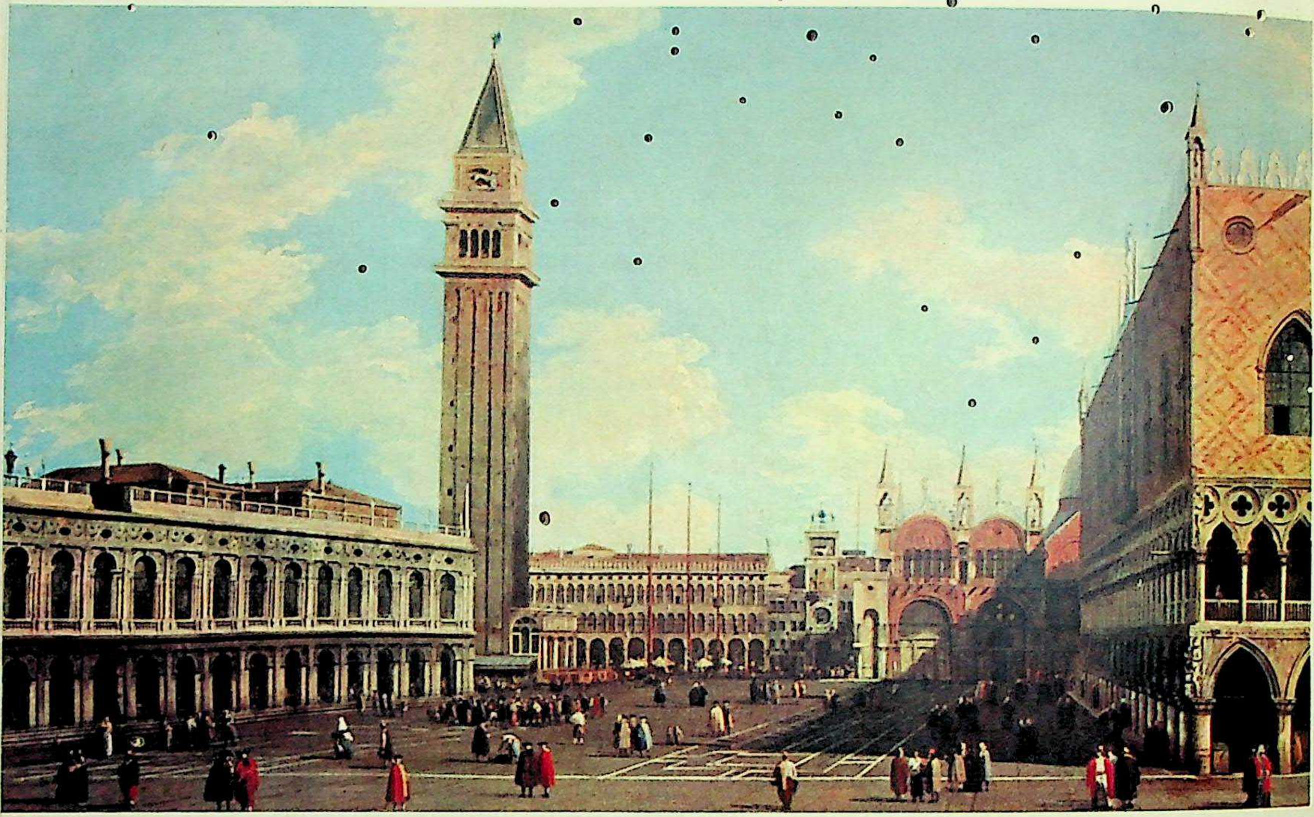
GIUSEPPE ANGELI

THE SOLDIER AND THE DRUMMER-BOY

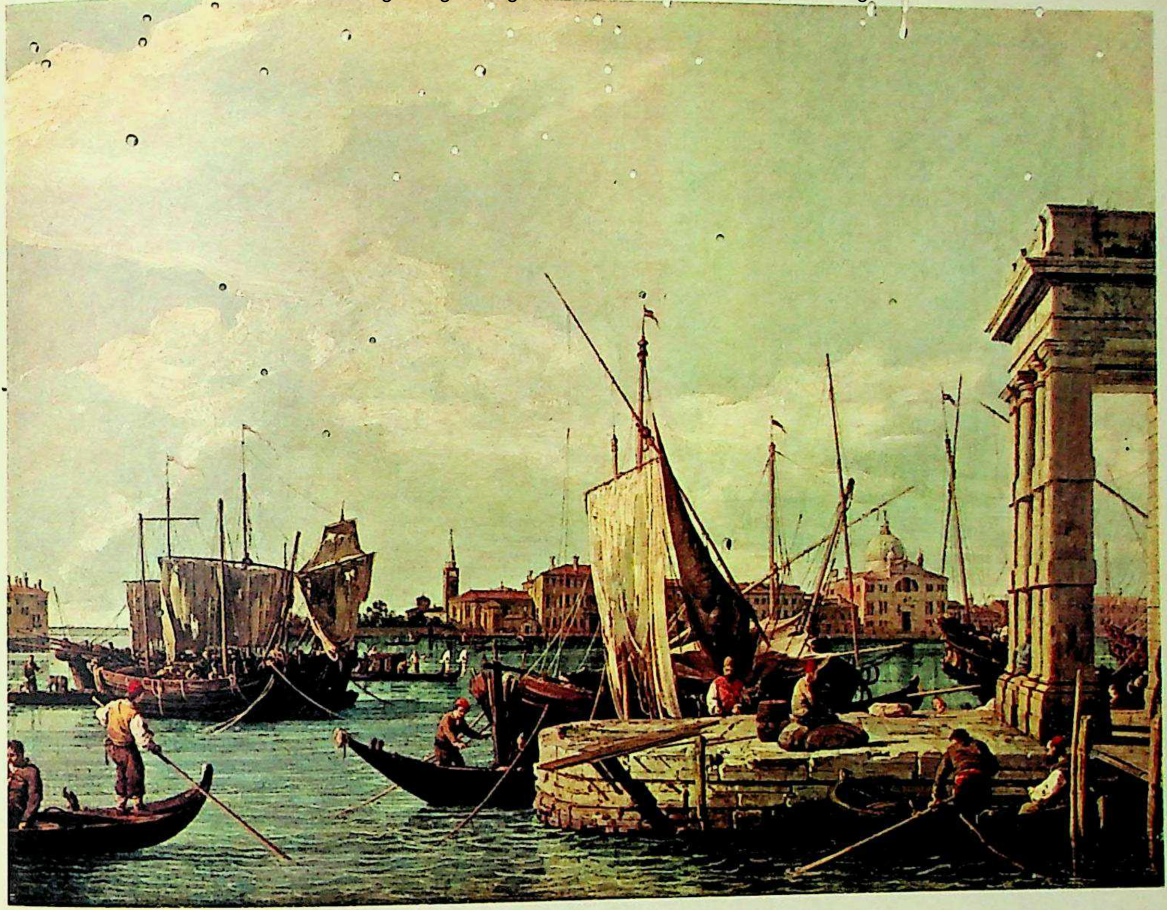
Louvre, Paris



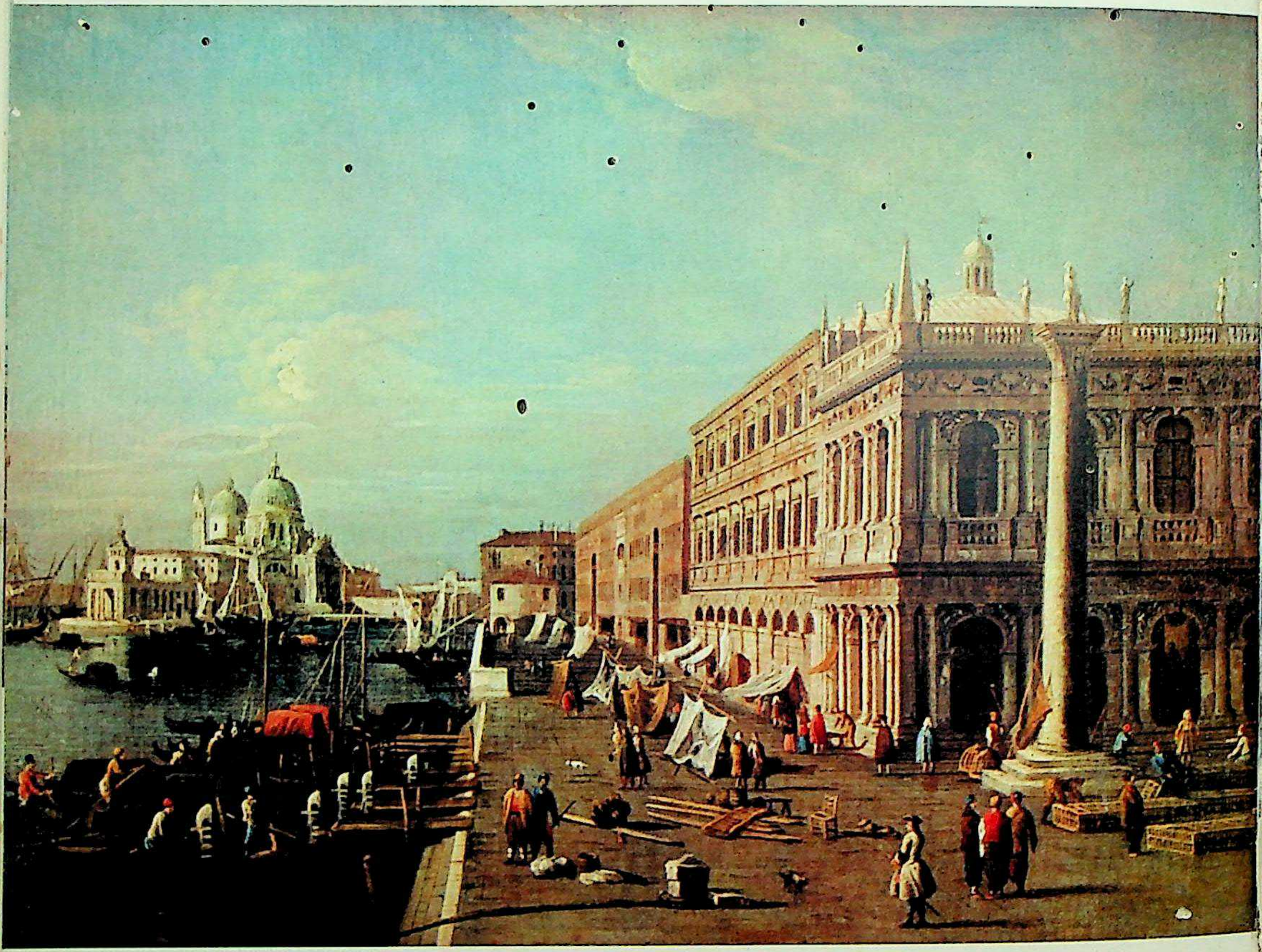
GIOVANNI DOMENICO TIEPOLO
The Minuet
Museo, Barcelona



ANTONIO CANALETTO
The Piazzetta in Venice
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

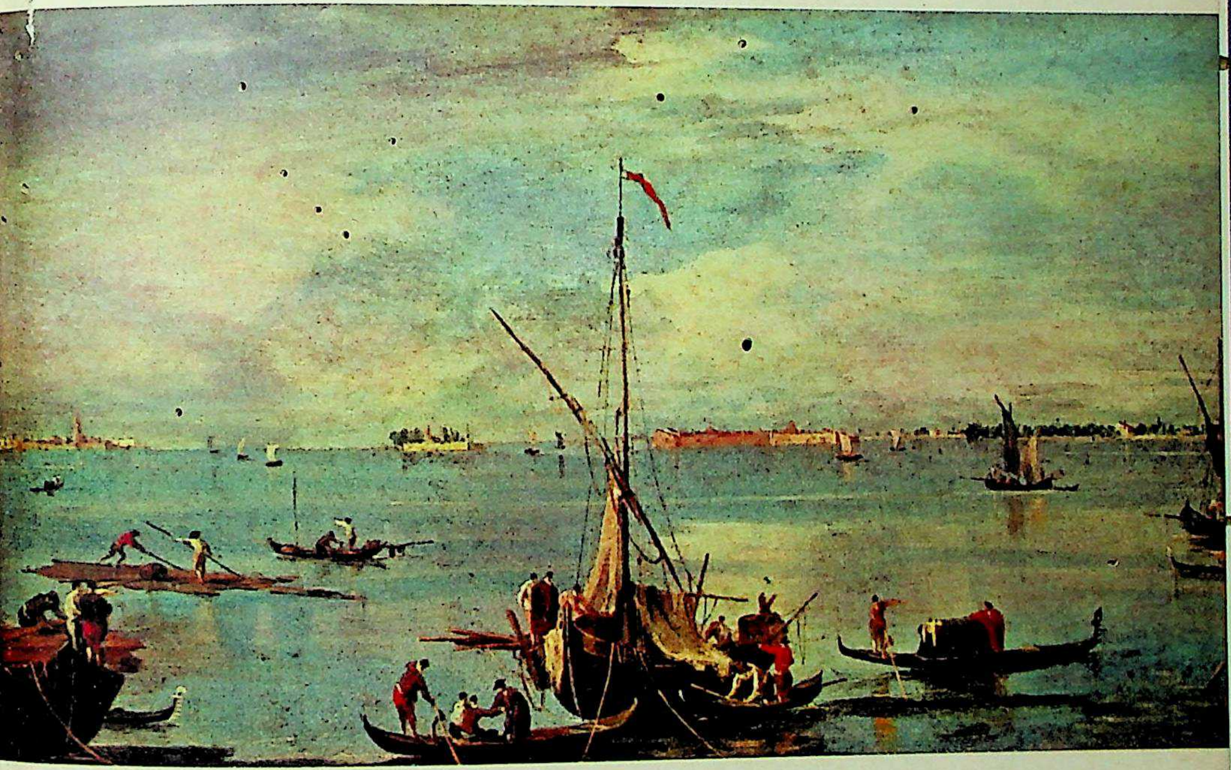


ANTONIO CANALETTO
View from the Dogana in Venice
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

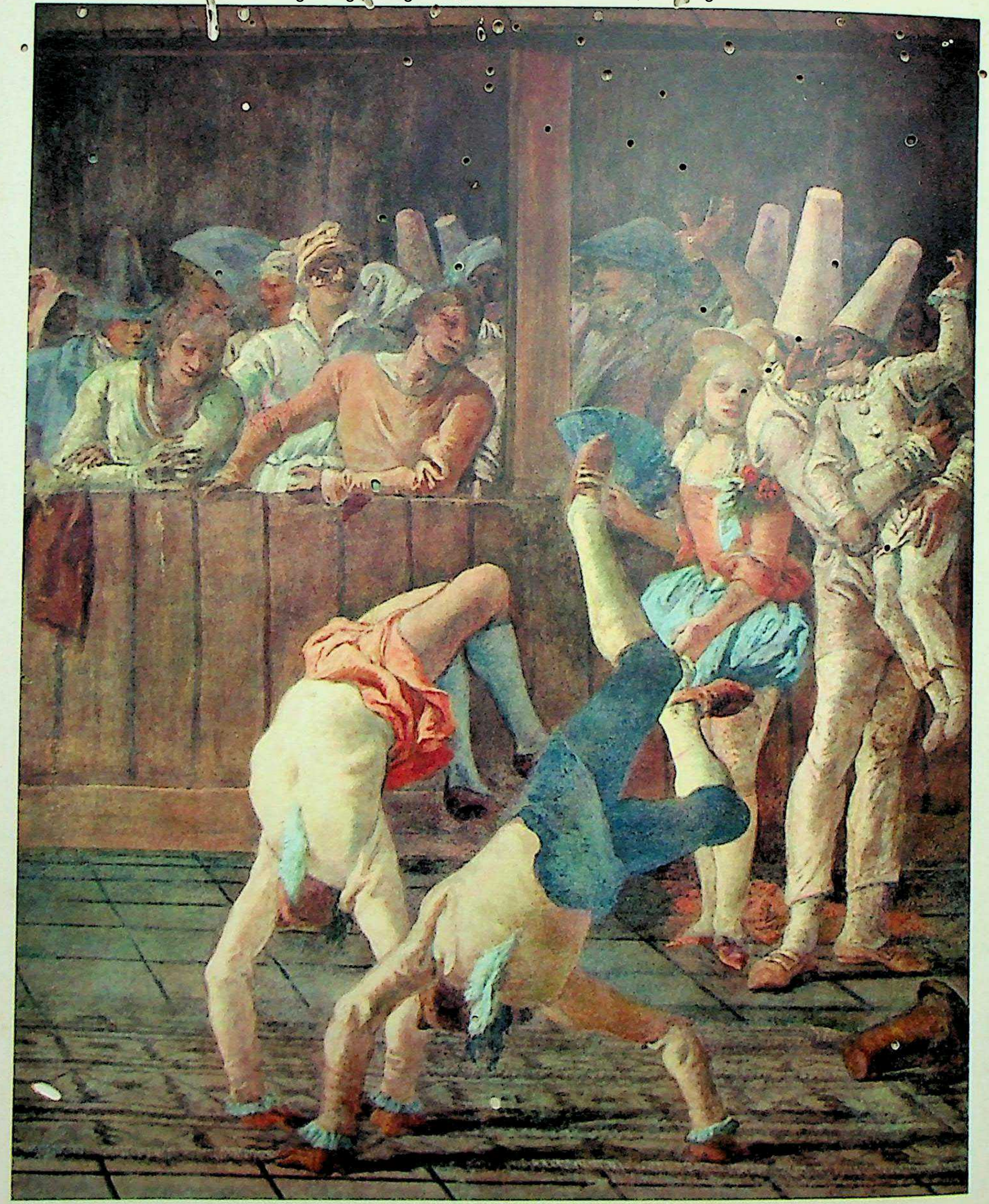


BERNARDO BELLOTTO
Entrance to the Grand Canal in Venice
Private Collection, Switzerland

State Museum,
LUCKNOW



FRANCESCO GUARDI
On the Venetian Lagoon
Thyssen Collection, Lugano



GIOVANNI DOMENICO TIEPOLO
THE TUMBLERS c. 1793–8
Palazzo Rezzonico, Venice

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Giuseppe Angeli was born in Venice in 1709 and died in that city in 1798. At the end of his life he was President of the Venetian Academy of Fine Art. The picture reproduced here was formerly attributed to G. B. Piazzetta, his master.

Antonello da Messina was born in Messina 1430 and died in that city in 1479. He was a great traveller and according to Vasari visited Van Eyck at Bruges. He learned the secret of the technique of oil painting from the Flemings. In 1457 he was reported to be in Sicily and later at Venice, Milan, Messina and again Venice. In the latter city he opened a studio frequented by the Bellini brothers. Venetian painting would have been different without his influence and he is accordingly considered as virtually belonging to that school.

Jacopo Bassano (Giacomo da Ponte) was born about 1510 at Bassano and died there in 1592. He was a pupil of his father Francesco Bassano the elder and of Bonifazio. He worked at Venice from 1530 to 1534 and also at Padua and at Bassano, painting chiefly rural scenes, but religious subjects and portraits as well, though no mythological pictures. He influenced Caravaggio and taught the young Greco to paint. Certain modern painters of the "Realist" school are indebted to his naturalism.

Jacopo Bellini was born about 1400 in Venice and died there about 1470. He was a pupil of Gentile da Fabriano, whom he followed to Florence in 1423 and afterwards to Rome. Few of his pictures are extant, but his sketch-books were preserved by his sons Gentile and Giovanni. He contributed to the technical discoveries that led to representation of the third dimension.

Giovanni Bellini was born in Venice about 1430 and died there in 1516. He served his apprenticeship with his father Jacopo, as well as at Padua in the studio of Squarcione. He underwent the influence of Antonio Vivarini and of Mantegna, his brother-in-law. About 1500 he became the pupil of two masters whom he had trained, Giorgione and Titian. He is always considered the most human of the Venetian painters of the Quattrocento.

Bernardo Bellotto was born in Venice in 1720. He died at Warsaw in 1780. He was a pupil of his uncle Antonio Canaletto, whose surname he took. He also studied under Pannini in Rome. He worked in northern Italy, at Munich and at Dresden, where he was Court Painter to Augustus III. He also worked in Vienna and St. Petersburg. When he died at Warsaw he was Court Painter to King Stanislas II. Poniatowski. Like his uncle, he was an excellent etcher.

Bonifazio di Pitati was born at Verona in 1487 and died in Venice in 1553. A pupil of Giovanni Bellini and probably of Palma Vecchio, he executed many religious pictures in which the subject is treated as if it were contemporary and the local colour is ignored.

Antonio Canaletto (Antonio Canal) was born in 1697 in Venice and died there in 1768. He left Venice for Rome at the age of twenty-two and worked with Luca Carlovarjis and Giovanni Pannini in 1722. He was in Venice about 1746 then visited London and returned to Venice again. He was both painter and engraver and created the painted and engraved *vedute* of Venice.

Giovanni Cariani (Giovanni Busi) was no doubt born — about 1480 — in Venice, though his parents were from Bergamo. He died in Venice in 1548, where he painted frescos in the Palace of the Podesta, in the church of Santa Maria Maggiore and in the Piazza Nuova. He was a pupil of Giovanni Bellini and a follower of Giorgione, to whom the picture reproduced here could well be attributed.

Vittore Carpaccio is mentioned as being in Venice after 1486. He died in 1525. A pupil of Gentile Bellini, he gave his religious compositions the aspect of everyday life in Venice. The series of pictures representing the "Legend of Saint Ursula" made him famous.

Giovanni Battista Cima da Conegliano was born at Conegliano about 1459 and died in Venice in 1518. He lived in Venice after 1492. A pupil of Alvise Vivarini, he was influenced by Bartolommeo Montagna, then by Giovanni Bellini, to whom he owes his poetic sensibility. He approximates to Perugino in his deep feeling for landscape.

Carlo Crivelli was born in Venice about 1430/35 and died at Fermo in 1495. He was a member of the Paduan school of Squarcione. He left Venice about 1457 and worked in an oldfashioned style in the border towns of the Republic, painting meticulous representations of sacred themes, generally adorned with a great number of garlands of fruits.

Jacobello del Fiore was born about 1370 and died about 1439. He was official painter to the Republic of Venice from 1415 to 1436 and invented the winged lion as an emblem of the Republic. He was influenced by Gentile da Fabriano.

Giorgione (Giorgio Barbarelli) was born at Castelfranco about 1477 and died in Venice in 1510. Very little information about his short life has reached us. He was probably a pupil of Giovanni Bellini. He had an overwhelming influence on Venetian painting at the beginning of the Cinquecento. Despite his great reputation relatively few works have been attributed to him for certain.

Francesco Guardi was born in Venice 1712 and died there in 1793. A pupil of his brother Gianantonio and of Canaletto, he developed under the influence of the Ricci, of Magnasco and of his brother-in-law Giovanni Battista Tiepolo. He painted landscapes and views of Venice in which his treatment of light and movement ave caused him to be considered by modern critics a precursor of impressionism.

Ridolfo Guariento is mentioned as being at Padua between 1338 and 1365. He lived for a while at Bolsano. He was summoned to Venice in 1365 to paint the "Paradise" fresco in the Doges' Palace. It was finished three years later and is to-day covered by Tintoretto's "Paradise". Guariento had affiliations both with the Byzantine tradition and the new tendencies initiated by Giotto.

Pietro Longhi (Pietro Falca) was born in Venice in 1702 and died there in 1785. He was the father of Alessandro and a pupil of Giuseppe Crespi at Bologna. He may have been influenced by the French school. A witty chronicler, he gives us an idea of the daily life of Venice in his time. He also painted portraits.

Lorenzo Lotto was born in Venice in 1480 and died at Loretto in 1556, as a lay monk of the Santa Casa. He was trained at Venice and worked at Treviso, Bergamo, Rome and the border towns of the Venetian Republic. At the start of his career he underwent the influence of Bellini and Giorgione and made the acquaintance of Palma Vecchio. He painted many religious pictures and some excellent portraits.

Bartolommeo Montagna was born at Brescia about 1450 and died at Vicenza in 1523. He worked at Venice, Vicenza and Verona and visited Padua. He underwent the influence of Antonello da Messina and of Alvise Vivarini. He founded the school of Vicenza, which at that time belonged to the Venetian Republic. His style is monumental, built up from sharp contrasts of light and shade.

Sebastiano del Piombo (Sebastiano Luciani) was born in Venice in 1485 and died in Rome in 1547. A pupil of Giovanni Bellini, Giorgione and Cima da Conegliano, he went to Rome in 1511. There he was appointed Sealer or Stamper of Papal Bulls, whence he obtained the name Fra del Piombo, meaning Brother of the Seal. In Rome, where he lived for thirty years, he underwent the influence of Raphael and Michelangelo but did not lose his characteristically Venetian style.

Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo was born in Venice in 1727 and died there in 1804. A son and pupil of Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, he worked with him at Venice, Würzburg and Madrid. After his father's death he decorated the Villa Zianigo near Venice.

Giovanni Battista Tiepolo was born in Venice in 1696 and died at Madrid in 1770. A pupil of Gregorio Lazzarini in Venice, he underwent the influences of Veronese, Piazzetta and the Ricci. He worked in the palaces and churches of Venice, Verona, Milan and Padua, at Würzburg in the house of the Prince-Bishop (1750—53) and after 1762 at Madrid. Among the foremost Venetian painters of the Seicento, he was the last of the great Italians to work in fresco.

Jacopo Tintoretto (Jacopo Robusti) was born in Venice in 1518 and died there in 1594. For some time he worked under Titian. He may have been a pupil of Bonifazio di Pitati or Paris Bordone. He admired Michelangelo. He executed compositions for many churches in Venice and decorated the walls of the Scuola di San Rocco. About 1578 he painted allegorical pictures for the halls of the Senate. He executed the immense compositions entitled "Paradise" for the Hall of the Grand Council. He did not neglect portraiture, concentrating his attention on the face.

Titian (Tiziano Vecellio) was born at Pieve di Cadore in the Dolomites between 1477 and 1496. He died in Venice in 1576. A pupil of Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, about 1505 he attended the studio of Giorgione. Between 1500 and 1518 he painted portraits and allegorical pictures at Padua. He stayed for some time with the Duke of Ferrara, Alphonso d'Este, then resided at Venice, Ancona (1520) and Brescia (1523) before returning again to Venice. He was summoned to the Court of the Emperor Charles V. in 1532 and appointed Court Painter in 1533. He subsequently worked in Rome and about 1550 spent some time with Charles V. at Augsburg. Titian's fame rests upon his portraits as well as his compositions.

Francesco Torbido was born in Venice about 1480 and died about 1562. Little information is available about this artist. He underwent the influence, first of Giorgione and then of Giulio Romano.

Bartolommeo Veneto was born in Venice about 1480 and probably died at Milan about 1540. During the years, approximately, from 1502 to 1540 he worked at Ferrara, Milan and Bergamo. He executed portraits which sometimes recall German art in certain of their technique.

Paolo Veneziano was born towards the end of the thirteenth century and died between 1358 and 1362. He was trained by Byzantine workers in mosaic and occupies an important transitional position between the icon painters and those of the Gothic school. He and his pupil Lorenzo Veneziano are considered the ancestors of Venetian painting.

Paolo Veronese (Paolo Caliari) was born at Verona in 1528 and died in Venice in 1588. A pupil of Antonio Badile at Verona he was influenced by Giulio Romano and Titian. He executed the retables in the cathedral at Mantua. He worked in the latter city, then at Vicenza and about 1553 settled in Venice, where he decorated the ceilings of the Halls of the Council of Ten in the Palace of the Doges. From 1553 to 1558 he decorated the church of San Sebastiano. In 1560 he visited Rome, then returned to Venice. In 1563 he painted the "Marriage at Cana" for the refectory of the Benedictine monastery of San Giorgio Maggiore. He then decorated, together with Tintoretto and Titian, the Hall of the Grand Council of the Doges. He was a brilliant colourist and possessed a rare skill in composition.

Alvise Vivarini was born in Venice about 1445 and died in 1504. He was the son of Antonio and the nephew of Bartolommeo Vivarini. He left the Gothic school to adopt the technique of Antonello da Messina. After 1488 he decorated, together with the Bellinis, the Hall of the Grand Council of the Palace of the Doges. He painted only religious subjects.

Bartolommeo Vivarini was born at Murano in 1432 and died about 1499. A pupil of his elder brother Antonio, with whom he worked between 1450 and 1462, he underwent the influence of Mantegna. The school of the Vivarinis, known as the Murano School, illustrates the Gothic period of Venetian painting, richly colourful and elevated in feeling.

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